

IT MAY SURPRISE
YOU TO KNOW THIS...
I HOPE IT DOES
SURPRISE YOU...
IN MY YOUTH,
I WAS A
PRACTICING
SATANIST.

MAKE NO
MISTAKE,
THIS WAS
MERELY
A PHASE...

THE TIME OF LIFE DURING
WHICH I FELT, AS OFTEN
YOUNG MEN DO, THAT THE
ONLY WAY TO EXPRESS ONE-
SELF IS TO STAND IN VIOLENT
OPPOSITION TO EVERYTHING
TRADITIONAL SOCIETY VALUES.

MY FATHER
HAD HOPED
THAT LIFE AT
UNIVERSITY
WOULD HELP ME
FIND MY WAY.

UNFORTUNATELY, I HAD THE BAD LUCK
TO FIND CIRCUMSTANCES APPROPRIATE
TO MY DEVIANT BEHAVIOUR. A MINOR
CULT HAD FORMED THERE AMONGST
THE STUDENTS, BASED AROUND AN
ANCIENT TOME FOUND IN THE
CAMPUS LIBRARY.

...IN THE
ATTIC.

THEY TOOK ME IN AND I JOINED THEM IN THEIR RITUALS, ANOTHER TWIT POKING AT THINGS GREAT AND TERRIBLE AFTER CLASSES HAD BEEN EXCUSED, SCHOOL-BOYS PLAYING DRESS-UP.

BUT IT WAS REAL. IT WAS PROOF OF THE DIVINE. HOW COULD WE NOT EXPLORE IT, WEAK AS WE WERE?

YES...I WAS ENTHRALLED BY MY FIRST CONTACT WITH THE WORLDS BEYOND. IT ENFORCED MY FOOLISH DELUSIONS, AND THEY SOON GREW BEYOND MERE CHILDISH REBELLION.

BEFORE LONG I DECIDED TO TAKE THINGS TO THEIR LOGICAL EXTREME.

EVEN THE OTHER CULTISTS WERE WARY, BUT I HAD EARNED THEIR RESPECT WITH MY INTELLIGENCE AND PERSONALITY AND ABILITY TO CONSUME INSANE AMOUNTS OF BEER.

ONE CLOUDLESS NIGHT, UNDER AN OLD BRIDGE, I LED THEM IN PRAYER...PRAYER TO A DEMON.

WHAT DID I WANT... WHY DID I DO IT? SOMETIMES I HAVE TO FIGHT TO RECALL... IT'S BEEN SO VERY LONG, NOW.

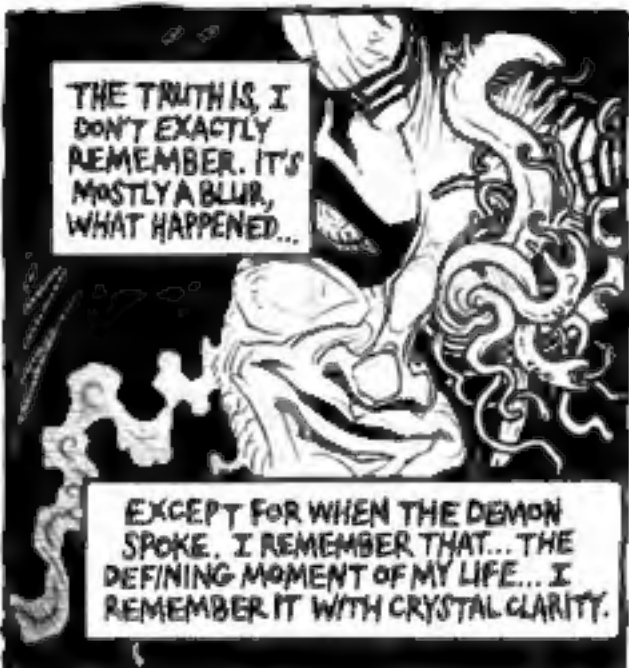
FOR ONE THING, I WANTED KNOWLEDGE. I WANTED TO SEE A DEMON WITH MY OWN EYES, AND UNDERSTAND THAT WHICH LURKS OUTSIDE OF THE LIGHT OF REASON...

BUT I WAS YOUNG AND NAIVE. I ALSO WANTED POWER. ALLIANCE WITH THE KINGS OF INVISIBLE COUNTRIES. I WANTED...

I SUPPOSE I WANTED TO BE A WIZARD.


AND WHAT DID I ASK FOR, WHEN I SAID THE WORDS AND THE EARTH VOMITED UP THAT DEMON...?

I'VE OFTEN WONDERED IF THERE WAS ANYTHING I COULD HAVE REQUESTED WHICH WOULDN'T HAVE RUINED ME.




THE TRUTH IS, I
DON'T EXACTLY
REMEMBER. IT'S
MOSTLY A BLUR,
WHAT HAPPENED...

EXCEPT FOR WHEN THE DEMON
SPOKE. I REMEMBER THAT... THE
DEFINING MOMENT OF MY LIFE... I
REMEMBER IT WITH CRYSTAL CLARITY.



WE LOST CONTROL, YOU SEE.
PERHAPS WE COULD HAVE
CONTAINED AN "O-CLASS"
DEMON... LIKE SANDRA... BUT
NOT AN ARCH-DEMON.

I MUST HAVE ASKED FOR
SOME KIND OF POWER,
BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT
IT GAVE ME.



IT WAS A JOKE TO HIM. IT. THAT'S
ALL... DAMNING ME TO HELL WAS
HARDLY MORE THAN A DIVERSION.
HE THOUGHT IT WAS CUTE.

DO YOU THINK IT'S
JUST A MARK ON
MY FLESH?

JUST AN
INSULT THROWN
IN MY FACE?

I'M NOT QUITE SURE WHAT
IT IS MYSELF OF COURSE.
I'LL ONLY KNOW FOR
CERTAIN ONCE I USE IT.

I WONDER WHAT THE OTHERS
ASKED FOR. I SUPPOSE I'LL
NEVER KNOW THAT. PERHAPS HE
GREW TIRED OF THE GAME AND
SIMPLY KILLED THEM ALL.

IN ANY CASE, THE
EXPERIENCE BLEED
INTO NIGHTMARE,
AND WHEN I
AWOKE I WAS
ALONE UNDER THE
BRIDGE. I
WANDERED INTO
THE WOODS, ON
THE EDGE OF
MADNESS AND
ULTIMATE
DESPAIR.


I WANDERED
FOR DAYS. I
STARVED AND
WEPT AND
SUFFERED
AND LOST
MY MIND.

BUT WHEN I EMERGED
I WAS STEEL.

I FEAR
NOTHING. I
LOVE
NOTHING.


YOU MUST BECOME
SUCH A MAN TO
LIVE WITH THE
KNOWLEDGE THAT
YOU ARE DAMNED.

I THINK YOU CAN GUESS THE REST OF MY STORY. I DEDICATED MY LIFE TO OPPOSING THE EVIL I NOW KNEW WAS LURKING IN THE WORLD... FOR REVENGE? FOR PENANCE? A SELF-LESS DESIRE TO PROTECT OTHERS?



I'LL LET YOU DECIDE FOR YOURSELF. I CEASED CONTEMPLATING MY MOTIVES LONG AGO.

NO... FOR DECADES NOW I'VE SIMPLY DONE MY WORK. I'VE HAD MANY, MANY ADVENTURES. I'VE HELPED SAVE THE WORLD ONCE OR TWICE. I EVEN FOUND THE DEMON WHO CURSED ME, AND BANISHED HIM FOR GOOD SOME YEARS BACK.

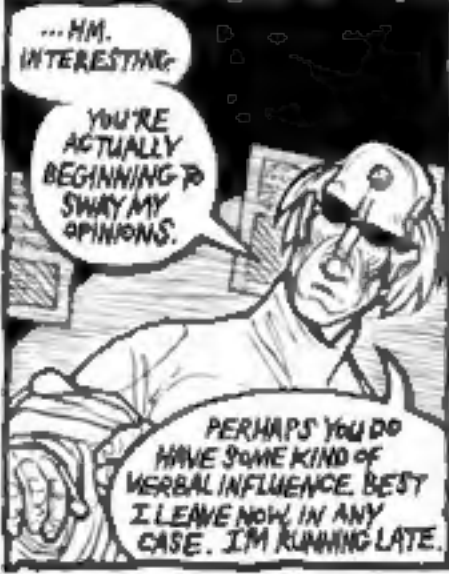
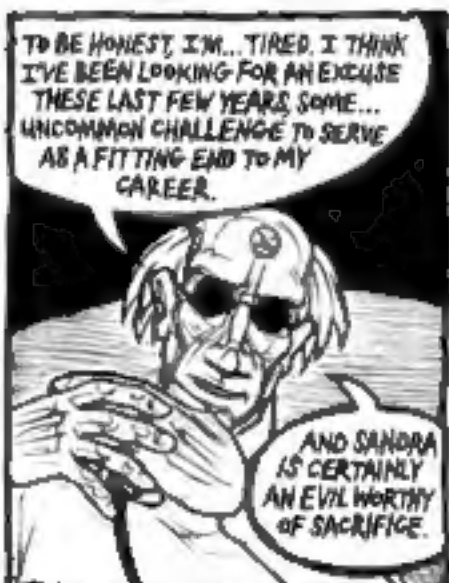


AND FROM ALL OF THIS, I HAVE COLLECTED NO JOY BEYOND THE TRANSIENT SATISFACTION OF A JOB WELL DONE.

NOW OCCASIONALLY, I'VE USED FREE-LANCE DIVINERS TO DIRECT ME TO WHERE I MIGHT MOST BE NEEDED. THIS IS HOW I CAME TO SET UP SHOP IN MISCELLANEOUS, A FEW SCANT MONTHS BEFORE SANDRA WAS CREATED.



I DIDN'T EXPECT TO RETIRE HERE. BUT I DON'T PARTICULARLY MIND.



SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE.

I'VE ALWAYS HATED THIS... THERE'S NOTHING WORSE THAN WAITING TO GET TO A HOSPITAL. HELL, IT'S WORSE NOW THAN EVER.

I WISH I COULD DRIVE. I WANT TO BE DRIVING. IT WOULD DISTRACT ME, IT'D MAKE ME FEEL IN CHARGE. THESE DAMN LEGS. THIS DAMN BODY.

IT'S ALL ITS FAULT.

THIS WOULDN'T EVEN BE HAPPENING IF I WAS NORMAL. I KNOW IT.

I CAN FEEL IT. THIS IS ONE OF THOSE SORTS OF THINGS.

I WISH SANDRA WAS DRIVING. I HATE DRIVING. IT'S TOO... PHYSICAL.

IF SHE WAS DRIVING THEN I COULD JUST THINK, AND MEDITATE ON THE SITUATION. IT'S NOT LIKE CRYSTAL GIVE ME A CHANCE...

HERE WAS THIS LITTLE GIRL AND I WAS THINKING... MY JACK-OH JACK IT'S AWFUL SNF I DON'T KNOW WHY I JUST CAN'T DUNDUNDIE BECAUSE I LOVE HIM... SAG... DUE HIM SO MUCH HE'S MY SNUGGEY BEAR MY LITTLE CUDDLY LOVEY PUPPY MY CHOC... MY GOOSHY GUM... I CAN JUST DIE IF HE DIES I'M... YOU HAVE HELP HIM OR R... WAAHHH... HE'S MY SNUGGLE... L... PLEASE... THE... SNIFF... SAY THE...

YEAH... UH... HUH... PLEASE HUH...

WHAT IS IT THIS TIME? WHAT'S WRONG WITH WALLY? THERE'S TOO MUCH WE DON'T KNOW... THERE ALWAYS IS.

BUT I BET WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO FIGHT AGAIN...

THE GIRL FOUND HELP... GOT THE WEREWOLF TO THE HOSPITAL... WELL WITHIN THE TIME-FRAME I ESTIMATED.

I MADE IT TO THE ROOF ELEVEN MINUTES AGO, AND THE OTHERS STILL AREN'T HERE.

I'M OLD BUT I'M STILL SO MUCH FASTER THAN THEY ARE. AM I WHINING ABOUT IT? DO I WANT TO FAIL? THAT RABBIT ALMOST SHOOK MY POINT OF VIEW...

CAN'T LET THAT STOP ME. IT'S JUST TOO LATE. I DOUBT ANYTHING CAN STOP ME... NOT WHINING OR VIEWS OR THE WEIGHT OF AGE.

I'M GLAD IT'S ENDING. OR I'M AFRAID I MIGHT HAVE GONE ON FOREVER.

YES... I AM AFRAID OF THAT, AREN'T I? AFTER ALL THIS TIME, A LITTLE FEAR, OF COURSE. ...HOW UTTERLY PROPER.

I'VE NEVER FEARED DYING. I WILL NOT FEAR HELL. THIS WILL BE A FINE DEATH.

IF SHE'S STUPID ENOUGH TO FLY HERE, I'LL BE READY FOR HER IN THIS POSITION. AND IF THEY DRIVE... AH.

I PICKED THE WRONG ROOF.

GOOD THING I BROUGHT THE GUN.

VERY GOOD... YES, THIS IS BETTER. DIVIDE AND CONQUER. THE OLDEST STRATEGIES ARE ALWAYS BEST.

BESIDES, I'VE BEEN WAITING EIGHT YEARS TO USE THE GOBLIN BULLET.

ACTUALLY, A MORE ACCURATE
TERM WOULD BE "BULLET
GOBLIN." A TINY CREATURE,
UNIQUE IN THIS UNIVERSE...

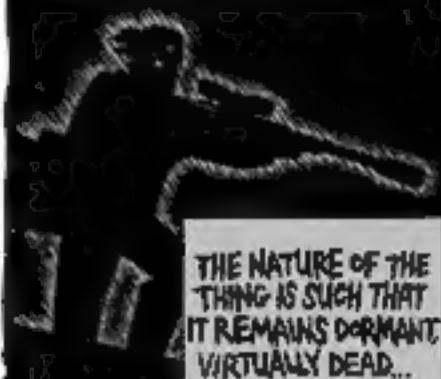


SOMEBODY
LEFT A BOX
RIGHT IN THE
DRIVEWAY,
THERE!

RUDE.



A SOUVENIR, FROM A BRIEF
CONTACT ONCE MADE WITH
A WORLD WHICH WAS WAGING
WAR ON ITS WIZARDS.



THE NATURE OF THE
THING IS SUCH THAT
IT REMAINS DORMANT,
VIRTUALLY DEAD...

...UNTIL
FIRED FROM
A GUN.







THIS NEXT PART OF THE
PLAN DEPENDS ON WHAT I
KNOW OF SANDRA'S CHARACTER.



I BELIEVE THAT ON
SOME LEVEL SHE IS A
GOOD PERSON BUT
SHE'S ALSO A COWARD.

SHE WILL WANT TO STAY BY HER
FRIEND'S SIDE BUT AFTER THE
SCENE I'VE MADE SHE'LL BE RISK-
ING EXPOSURE AND THE FEAR OF
EXPOSURE RULES HER LIFE.



SHE'LL CONSIDER NOW THE DOCTORS
WILL WANT TO EXAMINE HER, TO
INTERROGATE. NOW THE WHOLE
HOSPITAL WILL HAVE ITS EYES ON
HER. PERHAPS EVEN POLICE SOON.

OR IF I'M VERY LUCKY HER
DISGUISE MIGHT HAVE BEEN
DAMAGED THEY MIGHT BE
SEEING HER AS SHE TRULY IS.
RIGHT NOW THEY MIGHT BE
TOO AFRAID TO COME NEAR
HER, EVEN TO HELP HER FRIEND.

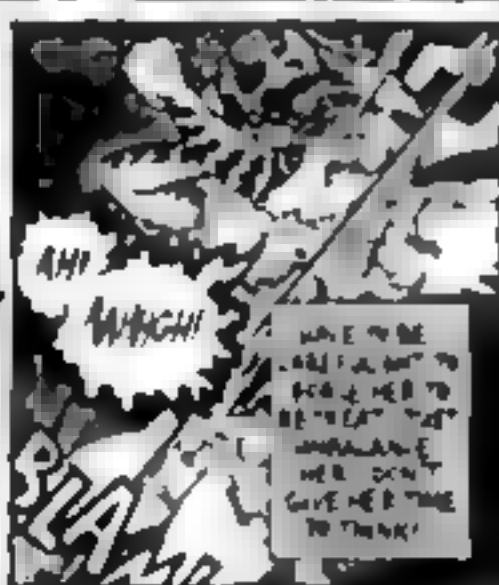
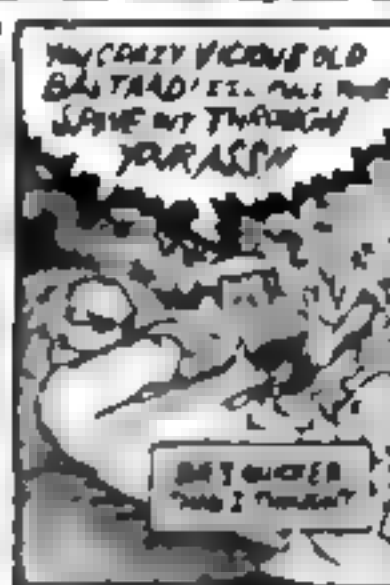
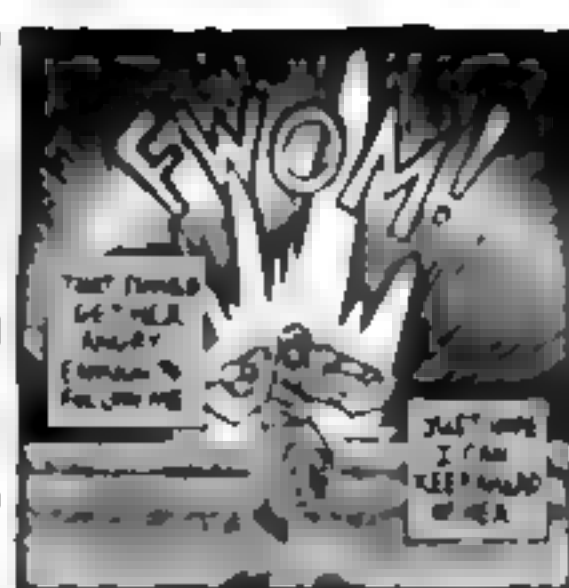


WHAT ELSE CAN
YOU DO, SANDRA,
BUT FLEE?











WE FOUND YOUR
NUMBER IN HIS
WALLET.

JACK
ALWAYS
WRITES
DOWN
PHONE
NUMBERS.
HE ..

HE CAN'T EVER
REMEMBER
THEM.

HE'S
GOT NO
HEAD FOR
NUMBERS.

WH-
WHAT'S
WRONG
WITH
HIM?

WE'RE
NOT QUITE SURE
WE FOUND A LITTLE
BLOOD ON HIS BACK
UNDER A HOLE IN
HIS SHIRT...

BUT THERE
WASN'T AN INJURY.
WE DON'T KNOW
WHAT IT MEANS,

WE DON'T
KNOW A LOT
ABOUT WHAT'S
GOING ON.

TRICKY LITTLE BASTARD
IT DUG ITS WAY IN AND FORCED
ME TO HEAL OVER IT!
IT'S DIABOLICALLY
CLEVER.

AND
GROSS

MAN FLOATING IN A MIND-
SCAPE WHILE GETTING SUCKED
ON BY AN EVIL PARASITE ISN'T
NEAR THIS BORING IN THE
COMIC BOOKS ABOUT ALL
I CAN DO IS JUST...
EXPOSITION.

NO-KAY
REVIEW.

THIS THING'S HOOKED INTO
MY BODY FEEDING ON MY
FLUIDS BUT SOMEHOW IT'S
ALSO DRAWING MY MAGIC
INTO DORMANCY AROUND
IT. AND MAGIC'S AS
MUCH A PART OF ME
NOW AS...

AS MY BLOOD
OR MY SKIN. I'M
SHUTTING
DOWN.

IT'S A PERFECT
WEAPON AGAINST
WIZARDS IT'LL KEEP
ME ALIVE SO THERE'S
NO CHANCE OF
RESURRECTION.

WHICH
DOESN'T MEAN
I CAN'T GO
BRAINDEAD...

IN THE BEST CASE
THEY'VE FORMED AN
ELECTRICITY-SEEKING
AND ONE OF THEM'S
TALKING TO SOMEONE
BEHIND THE SCENES
SUPPORT.

HH!!

SHOCK!!

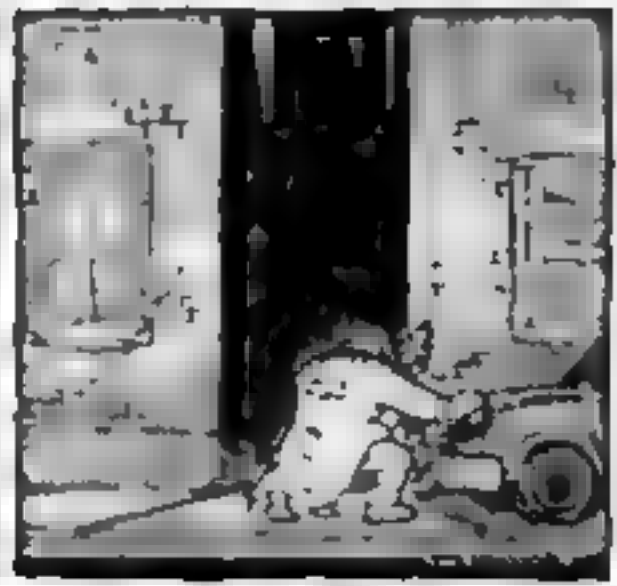
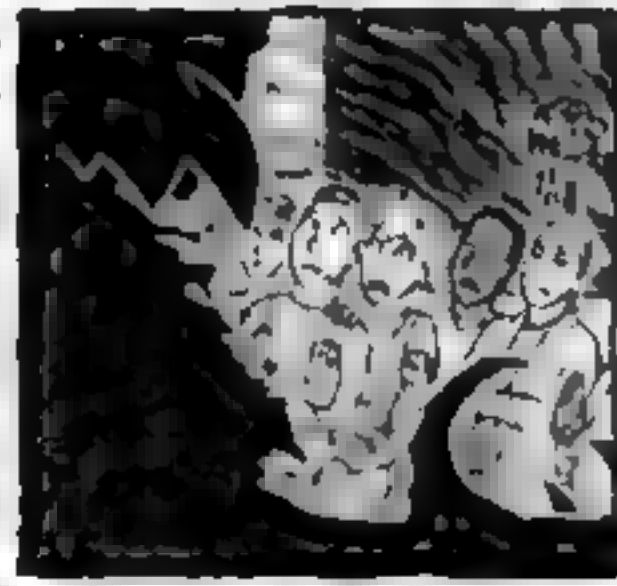
SHOCK!!

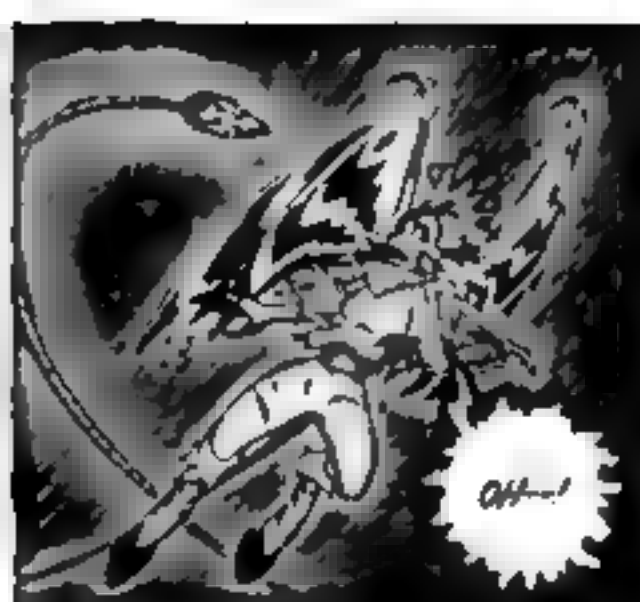
SHOCK!!













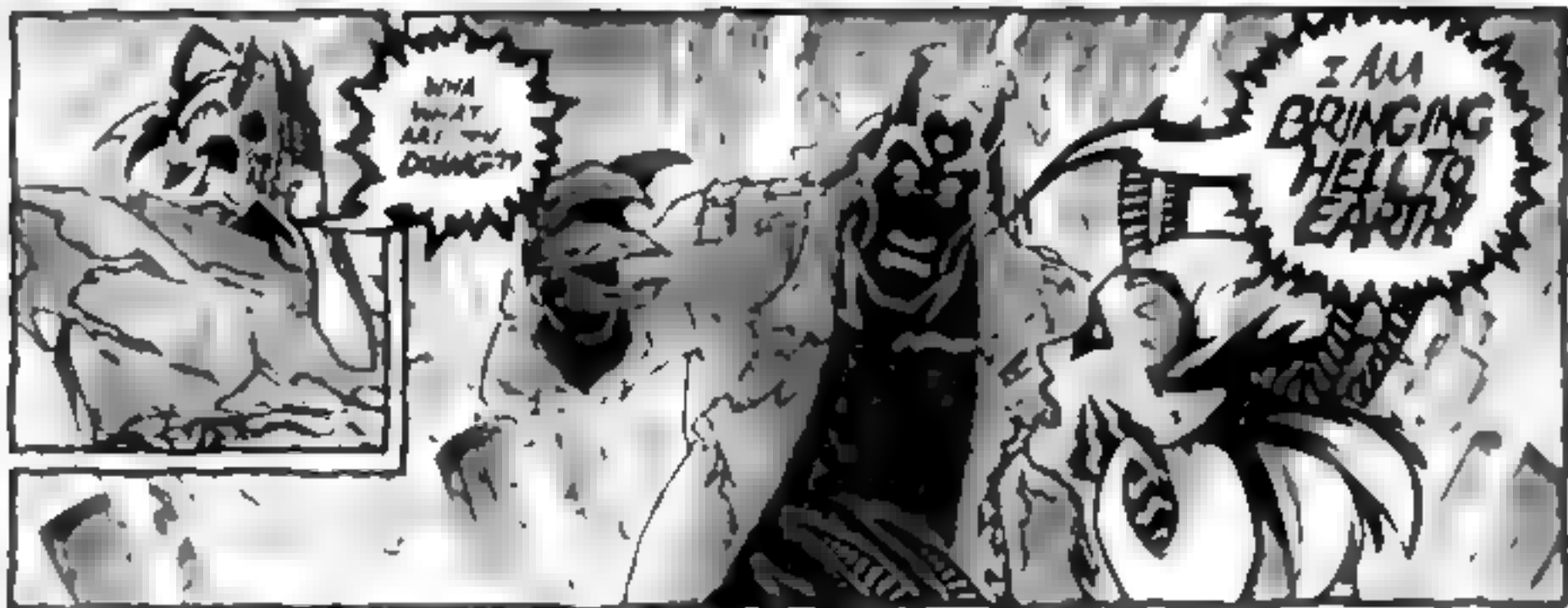
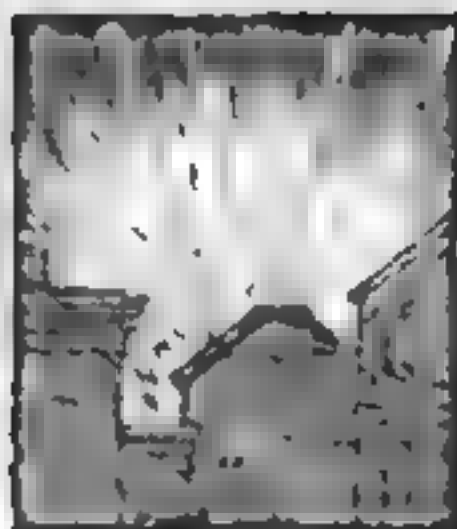
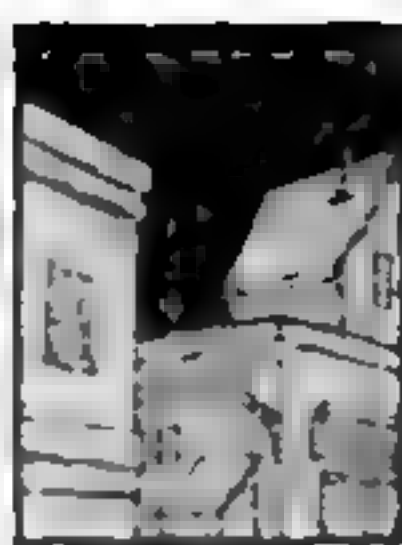
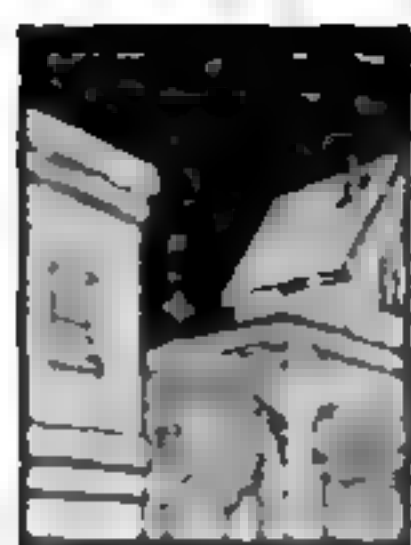














SANDRA

I'M SORRY
I CAN'T
HELP YOU



I CAN'T
DON'T WANT
TO CLOSE UP
THAT
NEED



HELP



MM

WELL,
WHAT
DO YOU
THINK?



LET GO! LET
GO! LET GO!
FREAK!



WHA-??



I'M NOT SURPRISED IT
WENT THIS WAY... AND
BECAUSE WE KNOW
TO GET MOST FUTURE...
EVEN AS WHEN HE
CURSED ME HE PROBABLY
SENSED THAT THIS
WOULD BE
APPROPRIATE



OH GOD WHAT'VE
YOU DONE! LET
ME GO! LET
ME GO!

ARE YOU
AFRAID OF
ME, SANDRA?

YOU
SHOULD BE
MORE
AFRAID OF
THEM.



I TOLD YOU WELT
ON EARTH IN A FEW
MINUTES IT WILL GO
BACK AND THEY WILL
TAKE ME WITH IT.



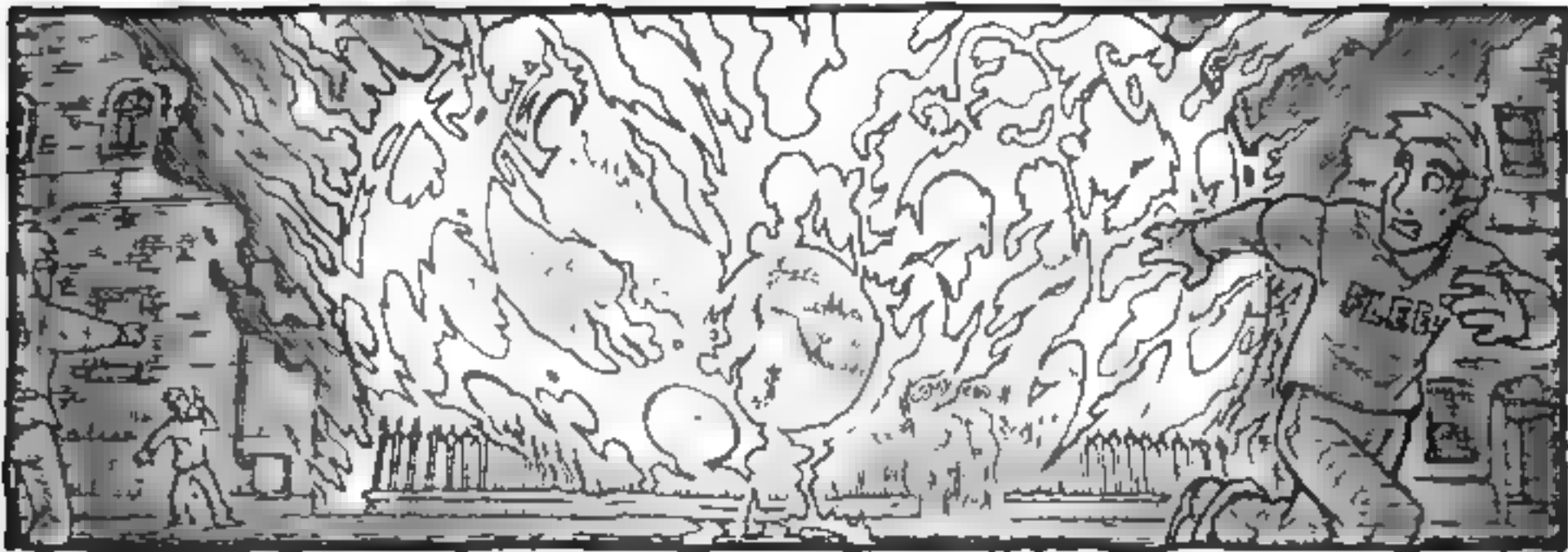
I'M SORRY

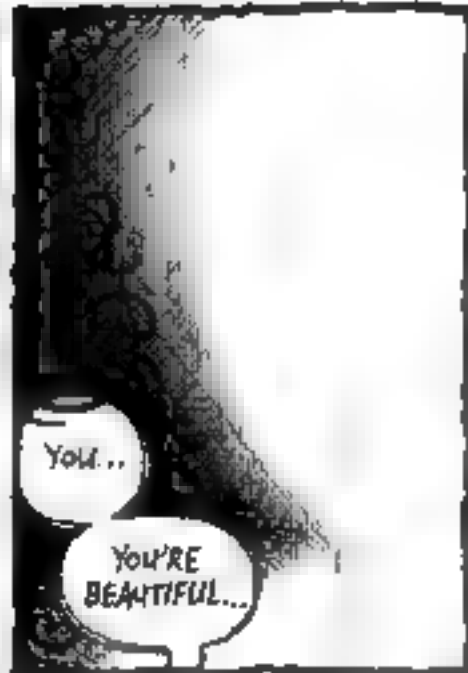
LET
ME



LET
ME
GO!



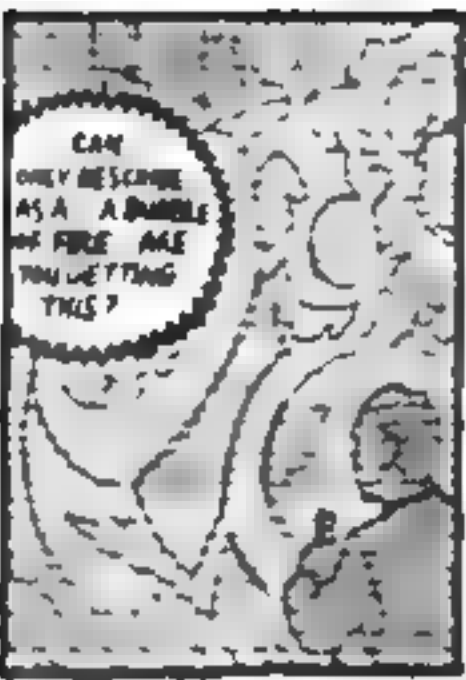








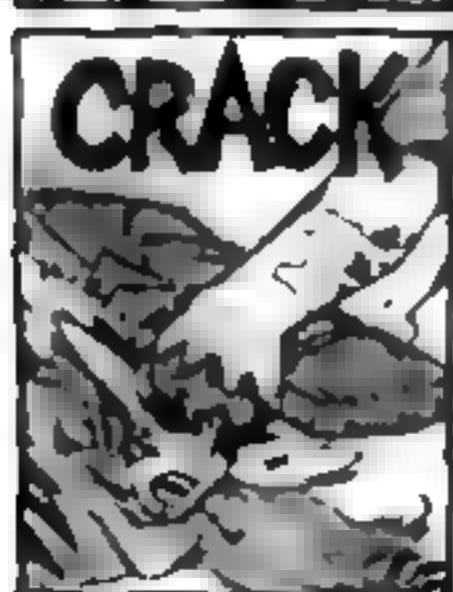


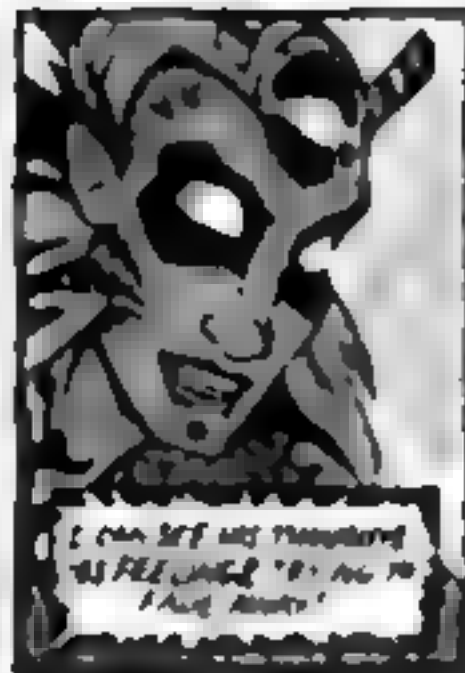


CAN
ONLY DESCRIBE
AS A A BUNDLE
OF FIRE ARE
YOU GETTING
THIS?
















SCREAMING. HE WON'T
STOP SCREAMING.
LOUDER AND LOUDER...

OH...GOD, I
NEVER KNEW
...I NEVER
KNEW IT
COULD FEEL
THIS GOOD.



JACK WAS NOTHING COMPARED
TO THIS. HE'S GLOWING WITH
AGONY, IT FEELS SO GOOD.



HOW LONG HAS
IT BEEN...
ARE WE IN
HELL YET?

I DON'T CARE.
THERE'S NOTHING IN
THE WORLD BUT ME...
AND HIM. AND HIS PAIN.

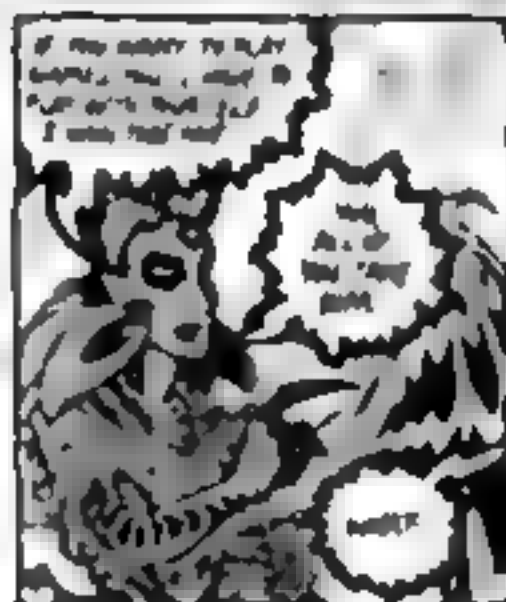


IF THIS IS
ETERNITY,
I'LL BE
CONTENT.















NO. NOTHING.
NOTHING. FEAR
NOTHING... LOVE
NOTHING. I
AM STEEL.


I'M GLAD IT'S
ENDING OR
I'M AFRAID..



I'M AFRAID...




WHAT DID I
WANT.. WHY
DID I DO IT?




I SUPPOSE I
WANTED TO
BE A WIZARD..








JACK
WERE YOU
TRYING TO
TRAP ME
JUST
THEN?




WE SHOULD
TALK WHEN
WE GET HOME.
COME ON,
THEY'LL START
WAKING UP
AROUND

IT WON'T
WORK AT
HOME
EITHER.



REMEMBER THE
LAST TIME I WENT
HUNGRY? YOU TRIED
TO TRAP ME THEN.
TWO AND I
SLIPPED
AWAY.

I WERE
GONE...



I'M SICK OF THE
HOUSE, JACK.
I'M SICK OF
HUMAN
THINGS.

WHAT ARE
YOU GOING
TO DO?





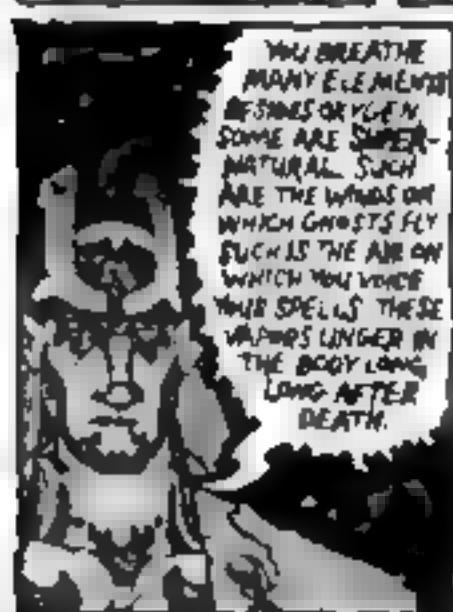
JACK ?

JACK,
WHAT JUST
HAPPENED?

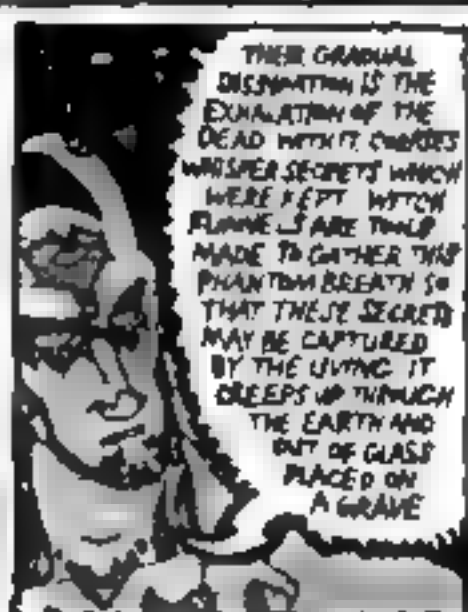


WALLY
THERE'S
SOMETHING
IN THE
GRAVE-
YARD.

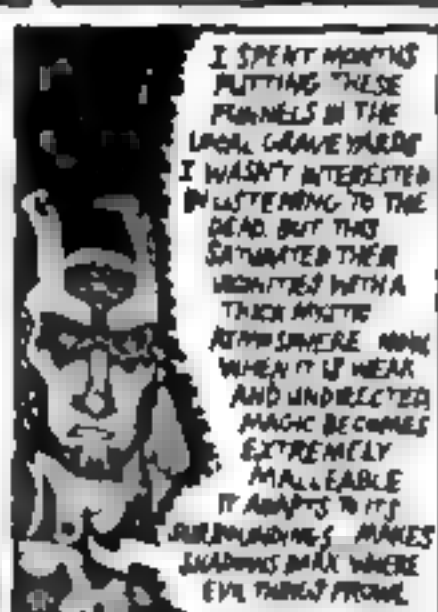
HELP
ME FIND
IT BEFORE
EVERYONE
WAKES
UP.



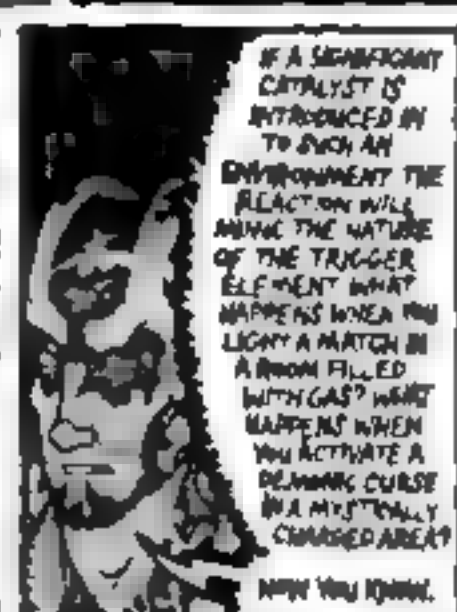
YOU BREATHE
MANY ELEMENTS
BESIDES OXYGEN.
SOME ARE SUPER-
NATURAL. SUCH
ARE THE WINDS ON
WHICH GHOSTS FLY.
SUCH IS THE AIR ON
WHICH YOU VOICE
YOUR SPELLS. THESE
WINDS LINGER IN
THE BODY LONG
LONG AFTER
DEATH.



THEIR GRADUAL
DISSENTATION IS THE
EXHALATION OF THE
DEAD WITH IT COMES
WHISPER SECRETS WHICH
WERE KEPT WITHIN
FLAME. IS ARE TOWNS
MADE TO GATHER THIS
PHANTOM BREATH SO
THAT THESE SECRETS
MAY BE CAPTURED
BY THE LIVING. IT
CREEPS UP THROUGH
THE EARTH AND
OUT OF GLASS
PLACED ON A GRAVE.



I SPENT MONTHS
PUTTING THESE
FUNNELS IN THE
LOCAL GRAVEYARDS.
I WASN'T INTERESTED
IN LISTENING TO THE
DEAD. BUT THIS
SATURATED THEIR
VOICINGS WITH A
THICK MYSTIC
ATMOSPHERE. NOW
WHEN IT IS WEAK
AND UNDIRECTED
MAGIC BECOMES
EXTREMELY
MALLEABLE.
IT ADAPTS TO ITS
SURROUNDINGS. MAKES
SHADOWS DARK WHERE
EVIL THINGS FROWN.



IF A SIGNIFICANT
CATALYST IS
INTRODUCED IN
TO SUCH AN
ENVIRONMENT THE
REACTION WILL
MIMIC THE NATURE
OF THE TRIGGER
ELEMENT. WHAT
HAPPENS WHEN YOU
LIGHT A MATCH IN
A ROOM FILLED
WITH GAS? WHAT
HAPPENS WHEN
YOU ACTIVATE A
DEMONIC CURSE
IN A MYSTICALLY
CHARGED AREA?

NOW YOU KNOW.



SO IN AN EXTREMELY
LARGE HUT SHELL,
THAT'S HOW YOU
MADE THE
HELL BUBBLE.

YES AND
NOW THAT I
HAVE ANSWERED
YOUR QUESTIONS, I
WOULD LIKE VERY
MUCH FOR YOU TO
ANSWER ONE
OF MINE.

SHORT



WHAT
THE HELL
ARE YOU
WEARING
BOY?

BELIEVE ME, I'D
RATHER NOT THINK ABOUT IT
BUT THIS WAS THE BEST WAY
I COULD FIND TO TALK TO YOU.



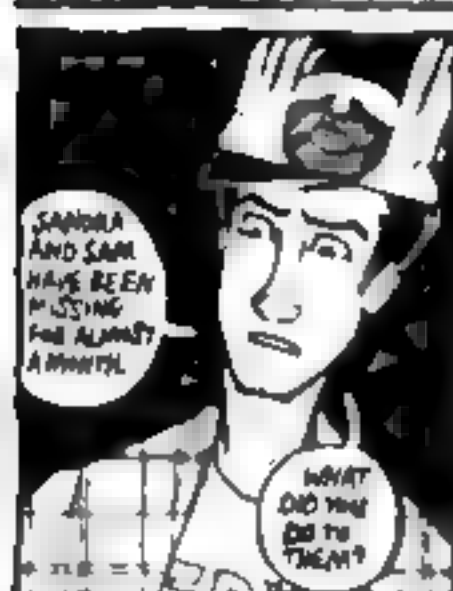
YOU COME ALL THE WAY
TO HELL WEARING A
THAT'S MY SCALP. JUST
IT'S ALL JUST TO HAVE
A CONVERSATION
WITH ME. I AM
FLATTERED.

THIS IS
JUST A LONG-
DISTANCE CALL.
I'M STILL IN MY
ROOM. YOU'RE
ALL I CAN SEE
OR HEAR.



THEN I AM ALSO
ENVIOUS THAT'S
CLEVER THOUGH
USING DEMONIC
TISSUE AS A
MEDIUM.

DEMONS ARE
MY AREA OF
EXPERTISE. NOW,
YOU STILL HAVEN'T
ANSWERED THE
BIG QUESTION.



SARAH
AND SAM
HAVE BEEN
MISSING
FOR ALMOST
A MONTH.

WHAT
DID YOU
DO TO
THEM?



ONE MONTH?
THAT'S ALL
IT'S BEEN?

ANSWER
THE
QUESTION



CAN YOU
FIND HER,
WIZARD?

I'VE TRIED
BUT IT'S LIKE
SHE'S EVERY-
WHERE. HER
ESSENCE IS
COVERING THE
TOWN LIKE A
BLANKET.



YES AND
SHE IS HERE
TOO.

I CAN'T
ANSWER
THESE
QUESTIONS
BECAUSE SHE
WON'T WANT
ME TO.



YOU'RE UNDER HER POWER, SOMEHOW?

IT IS PART OF MY TORTURE TO KNOW VARIOUS TRUTHS.

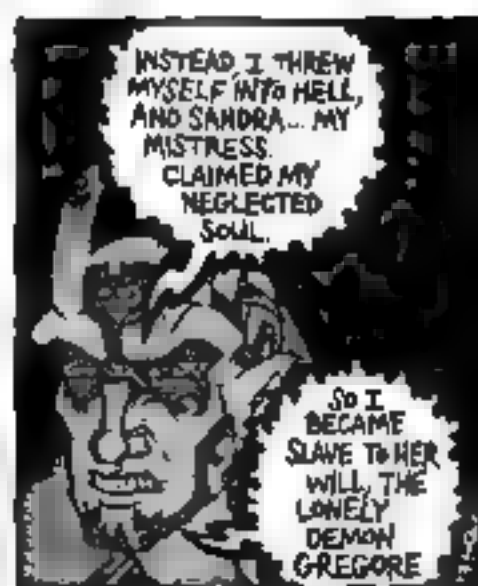


ALL MY LIFE, I THOUGHT I HAD LOST MY SOUL TO HELL TO THE DEMONS. MORE THAN DEATH, IT WAS MY GREATEST CERTAINTY.



BUT FOR WHATEVER REASON, MY FLESH WAS THE ONLY THING THAT DEMON EVER TOUCHED. I WAS FREE TO FIND HEAVEN.

IF I HAD ONLY DOUBTED OR JUST DARED TO HOPE



INSTEAD I THREW MYSELF INTO HELL, AND SANDRA... MY MISTRESS. CLAIMED MY NEGLECTED SOUL.

SO I BECAME SLAVE TO HER WILL, THE LONELY DEMON GREGORE



AND HER WILL, NOW, IS FOR ME TO BE SILENT TO YOUR IN-QUIRIES.

GREAT PERFECT THANKS SANDRA.



AND OH, THANK YOU, I GUESS. GOOD LUCK WITH THE WHOLE HELL THING.

WAIT!



I HAVE MORE QUESTIONS AND YOU MAY BE THE LAST LIVING THING I EVER SEE..

I DOUBT IT. BUT GO ON



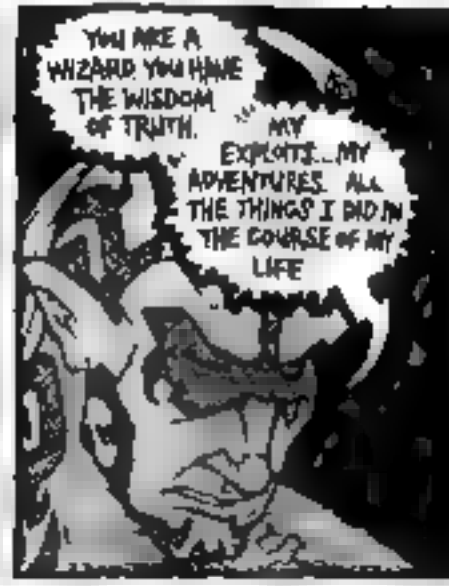
HOW DID YOU ESCAPE MY GOBLIN BULLET?

WELL, LATELY MY COMMUNITY HAS BEEN EXPERIENCING SURGES OF MAGIC IT OVERLOADED AND SOME KIND OF SPIRIT HELPED ME OUT OF THE COMA..



AND THAT'S A MYSTERY FOR LATER AFTER I'VE DEALT WITH SANDRA

IS THAT ALL?



YOU ARE A WIZARD. YOU HAVE THE WISDOM OF TRUTH.

MY EXPLOITS...MY ADVENTURES. ALL THE THINGS I DID IN THE COURSE OF MY LIFE



I DID SOME GOOD, DIDN'T I?

THAT COUNTS FOR SOMETHING.



DOESN'T IT?



EVERYTHING COUNTS FOR SOMETHING



THERE'S TOO MUCH WE DON'T KNOW THERE ALWAYS IS.

BUT I BET WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO FIGHT AGAIN..



END?



WHY THAT'S
MARY SHEETS
AS I LIVE AND
BREATHE!

OF EVEN
AS I DON'T DO
EITHER IS THAT
YOU DEAR
MARY??

WHY
POOKA ZIN MY
RARENT FIE NO!
HOW ARE YOU THIS
FINE MORNING?

SIMPLY
MARVELOUS TO
HAVE FOUND YOU
UP AND ABOUT NOY
DEAR YOU SLEPT
WE... I HOPED

BETTER THAN
YOU I'M SURE! YOU DON'T
SLEEP AT ALL I HEAR POKA
THING HAVE YOU
BEEN LONELY?

SOMEWHAT,
SOMEWHAT
MOSTLY IT'S JUST
BEEN CREATURES
WITH A LITTLE
HUMAN IN THEM—
WEREWOLVES AND
VAMPIRES AND
SUCH

BUT THAT'LL CHANGE
NOW, AND THE OTHERS
CAN'T BE FAR BEHIND
IF MARY SHRIEK'S IS
HITTING THE TOWN!

EVERYONE'S FORGOTTEN
ME IN MY OLD LANDS, SO I'M
LOOKING FOR SOME PLACE TO
START OVER! I WAS CON-
SIDERING THAT VILLAGE,
THERE .

IT'S
STILL EARLY
I HAVEN'T EVEN
FOUND A TOWN
YET TO HIT

AND
THOSE LIKE
ME, NASTY
ENOUGH TO
ENDURE A
HUMAN
WORLD.

BUT IT
SEEMS TO
HAVE BEEN
TAKEN

CRUNCH
GLP-E

AH THAT CAUGHT MY
NOTICE AS WELL I
SMELT A STRANGE
RABBIT.

HMM
SOUNDS A BIT
CROWDED

I'LL
MOVE
ON

SO WILL
I NEW
GIRL'S DOING
FINE ON HER
OWN.

I CAN TELL
SHE'S IN NO
MOOD TO
ENTERTAIN

YES,
RUDE TO
INTRUDE

SHE'LL
ATTRACT
COMPANY
ANYWAY WITH
AN AIR
LIKE THAT

PERHAPS YOU
SHOULD CONSIDER
ENGLAND! THEY
NEED A GOOD
HORROR SINCE I
GOT KICKED
OUT.

ARE ANY
OF YOUR
BROTHERS OR
SISTERS
AWAKE YET,
ZIN?

SURELY
SOON, SURELY.
MANY THINGS
ARE WAKING,
I CAN FEEL
IT!

FOR AS
MANKIND
DRIFTS TO SLEEP
ITS NIGHTMARES
MUST COME
AWAKE!

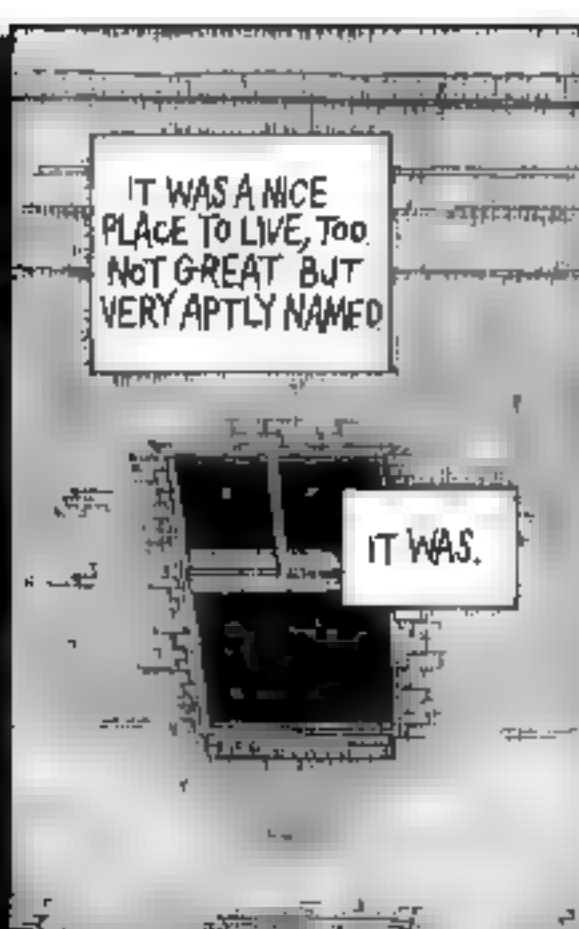
INDEED! IT'S
ALMOST AS ANY
SMART HUMAN
MIGHT
SAY!

THE
SLEEP OF
REASON
PRODUCES
MONSTERS!




THE TOWN OF MISCELLANEOUS.

IT WAS FOUNDED IN 1699 BY A MURDERER AND THIEF, THOUGH EVERYONE REMEMBERS HIM AS A FARMER. IT WAS MOST NOTABLE FOR BEING THE ONLY TOWN OF ITS SIZE IN AMERICA WITH JUST ONE "MIKE," THOUGH HARDLY ANYONE KNEW THAT.




IT WAS A NICE PLACE TO LIVE, TOO. NOT GREAT, BUT VERY APTLY NAMED.

IT WAS.




LATELY, A PALL SEEMS TO HAVE FALLEN. MORE AND MORE, PEOPLE HERE ARE CASTING THEIR EYES DOWNWARD AS THOUGH IN FEAR OF THE SKY.

LIKE YOU WILL. YOU BURY YOUR FACE IN YOUR PILLOW BECAUSE YOU'RE AFRAID. BUT UNLIKE MOST PEOPLE, YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE AFRAID OF.



THE THING THAT JUST CAME IN THROUGH YOUR WINDOW.




DID YOU MISS ME, WILL?

I'M ONLY EVER RIGHT NEXT TO YOU.

GO AWAY
PLEASE, PLEASE
GO AWAY.




I NOTICE YOU'VE BEEN PRAYING.




DO I GIVE YOU FAITH?

DO YOU THINK THAT BECAUSE I'M HERE, THERE MUST BE ANGELS SOMEWHERE ELSE?



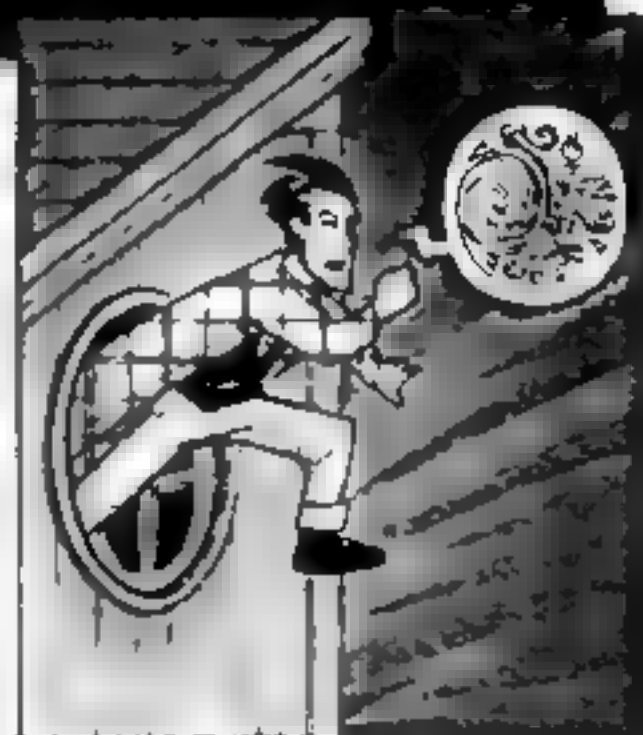
I DON'T KNOW IF GOD EXISTS EITHER, WILL I TRIED TALKING TO HIM ONCE

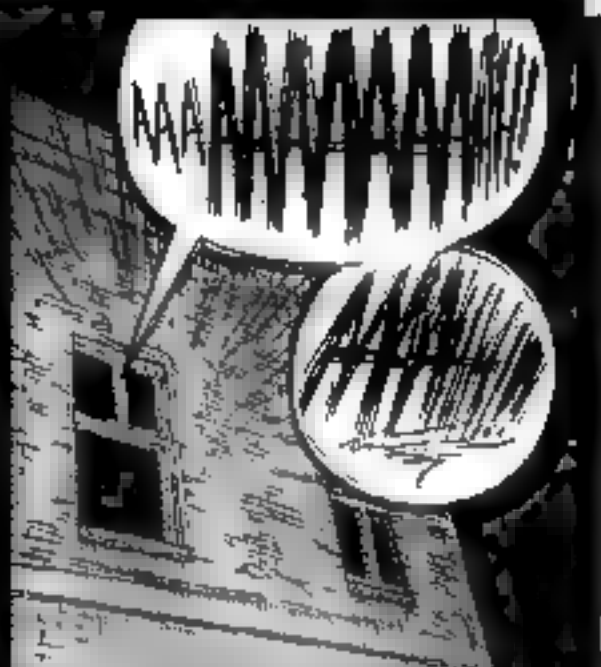
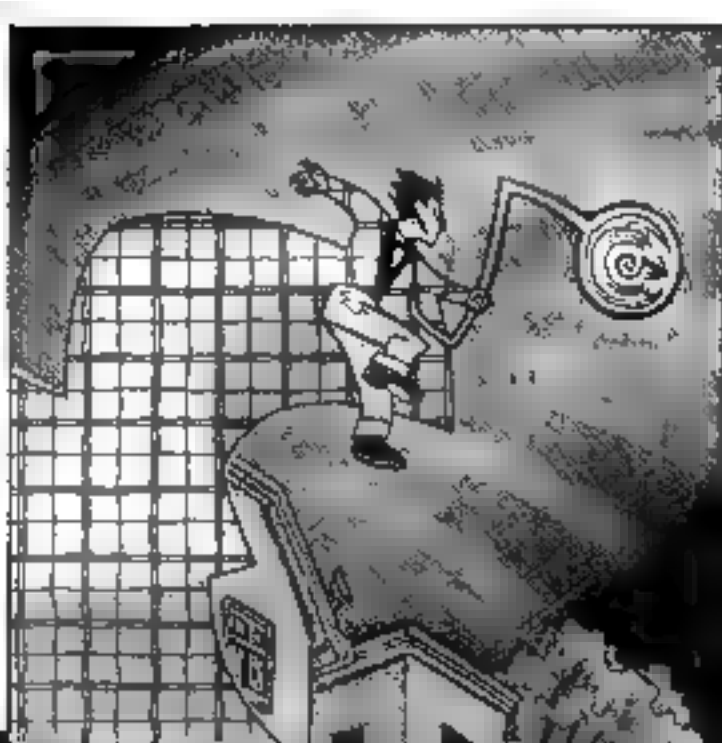
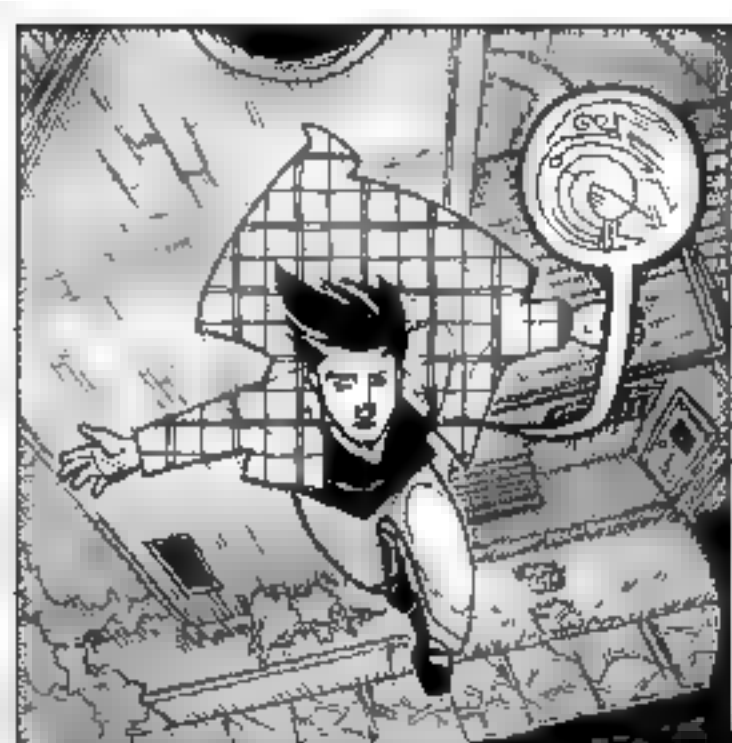
I DIDN'T GET A RESPONSE



KIND OF LIKE NOW. WILL, PAY ATTENTION. I'M GOING FOR CREEPING UNCERTAINTY AND YOU'RE STILL JUST IN TERRIFIED ANXIETY.

YOU'RE USUALLY A BETTER LISTENER.





ARE YOU
OKAY?

OOH. OH.
FIRST TIME I
EVER DID
THAT

WAIT SANDRA!
I GOT
YOU!!

YEAH!
HOW DID
YOU FIND
ME?

WHM... I ENCHANTED A
MAP TO ALERT ME IF
YOU SPILLED BLOOD.
ARE YOU ALRIGHT??

I'M
FINE, NOW.
YOU SHOULD
SEE THE
OTHER
GUY.

OKAY...
UH...

ARE
YOU
EVIL?

EVIL??

HAHAHAHA!
HAHAHAHA!

YES.

WELL... HUH.
I GUESS
YOU'VE BEEN
EVIL FOR A FEW
MONTHS NOW,
SO... YOU
MUST BE
GETTING
PRETTY
SICK OF--

HUT-TAH!

OOH, NEAT
WHAT DOES
THIS DO?

IT'S A BINDING-
SPELL, AND I MADE
IT JUST FOR YOU. I'M
BRINGING YOU HOME,
AND YOU ARE IN SO MUCH
TROUBLE YOUNG LADY!

I'M HALF A YEAR
OLDER THAN YOU, AND
HOME IS WHEREVER
I WANT IT TO BE
I'M FREE.

YEAH? YEAH?
FREE TO BE A
MONSTER? TO
TORTURE PEOPLE,
ALL LIKE
THAT?

PRETTY
MUCH.

NO
NOT ANY
MORE LITTLE
MISS SUNSHINE!
YOU ARE
GROUNDED!





I MIGHT
BE DEAD.

IT'S A
POSSIBILITY

MAYBE SANDRA
DIDN'T REALLY
TURN E.V.L. MAYBE
I DID OUTSIDE
THE BAR

I'M IN HELL AND SATAN'S
JUST JOKING WITH ME
BY MAKING ME THINK I'M
ALIVE AND THAT
SANDRA'S TURNED EVIL

AND THAT
I'VE BEEN
IN THIS
BUILDING FOR

WELL

NO IF I WAS
IN HELL THEN
I WOULDN'T
BE GUESSING
THAT I WAS
WITH A
WHIMSICAL
MONOLOGUE
THAT'S
A JOKE
SCRIPTING

IN FACT DID I
ALREADY DO THIS
ANYWHERE?
SEEMS FAMILIAR

I MUST
BE GOING
CRAZY

OR MAYBE
I'M JUST
BORED

BORING CAN DRIVE ME ALTY
RASA'S CRAZY OR SO I'VE HEARD
I NEED HER TO GET A TV OR A
RADIO SOMETHING THAT MAKES
NOISE I'M SICK OF YELLING

IF SHE GOT A TV AT
LEAST I COULD DISTRACT
MYSELF IF SHE GOT A
TV AT LEAST I COULD
BREAK IT OVER HER
HEAD WHILE SHE'S DISTRACTED

IS THIS
MARRIAGE
IS LIKE?

OH GOD SHE'S
WEARING ME
DOWN, ISN'T SHE?

HAVE TO KEEP IT
TOGETHER REMEMBER
I HAVE TO FORGIVE--

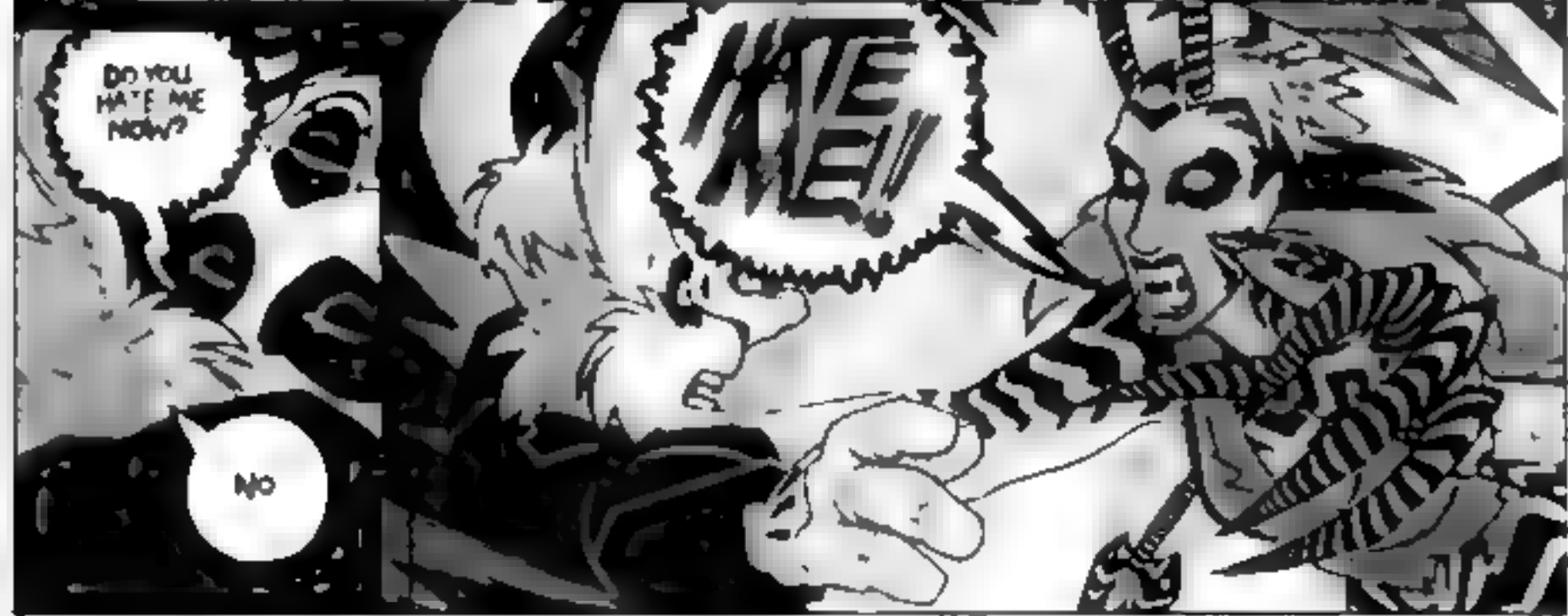
DO
YOU HATE
ME YET,
SAM?

NO

I DON'T
HATE
YOU

SO HOW
WAS YOUR
DAY
HONEY?

SAME
OLD SAME
OLD
YOU?





ENOUGH!
I GET IT,
YOU FREAKING
BASKET
CASE!



NO YOU DON'T!
YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY
UNDERSTAND WHAT
YOU'RE DOING TO ME!
OR YOU WOULD
GIVE IN!



YOU THINK
YOU'RE DOING
ME A FAVOR??
YOU THINK
YOU'RE MY
FRIEND?

I AM
NOT YOUR
FRIEND! I AM
NOT SANDRA
EASTLAKE!



I
SAY YOU
ARE



WELL I
SHOULDN'T
BE
I AM THE
GOD OF THIS
TOWN OKAY? IN
THE NIGHT I'M
EVERYWHERE
I'M WITH
EVERYONE

AND
NOW THE
SUN IS RISING,
DRIVING ME BACK
FORCING ME TO
SHRINK INTO
MYSELF

BUT I'M STILL
IN THE SHADOWS
PEOPLE FEEL ME
WHEN THEY PASS OUT
OF THE LIGHT IN THE
SHADE AND DARK
CORNERS

ALL OF
THE DARKNESS
IN THIS
TOWN IS
MINE



BUT
I'M NOT
PURE



SAM, IT HURTS IT'S
LIKE I'M CAUGHT ON A
NAIL AND I KEEP
MOVING FORWARD AND
MY SKIN IS TEARING
OFF ON IT

GOD,
NOW WITH THE
WHINY GOTHY
PROSE THIS
IS HELL



I NEED YOU,
SAM SANDRA NEEDS
YOU. YOU'RE
CLOSER TO MY
SOUL THAN
ANYTHING.

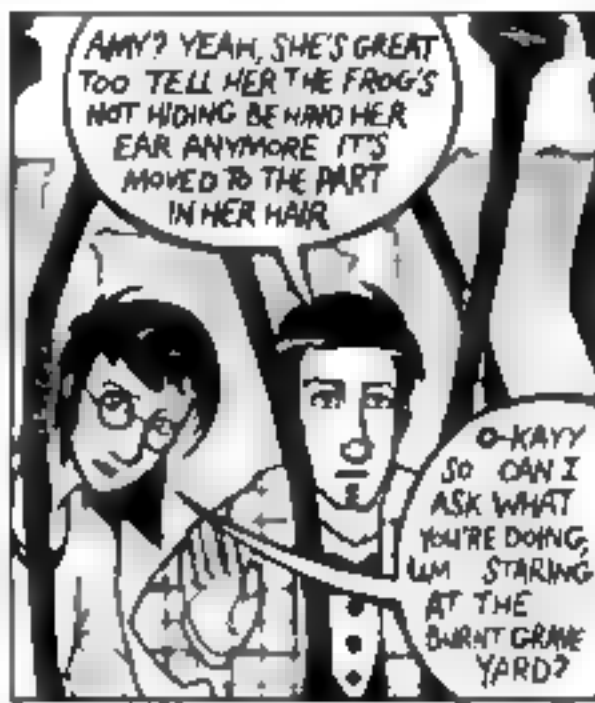
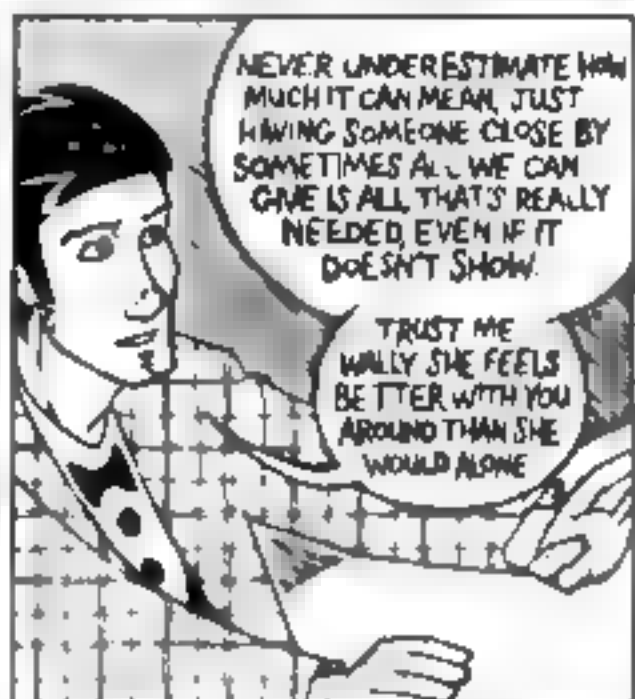
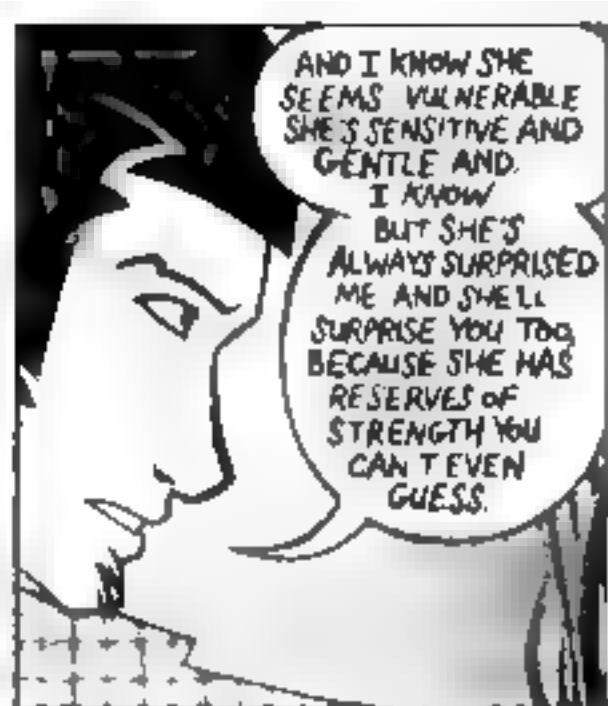
NEXT YOU'LL
START WRITING
LOUSY RHYMING
VERSES ABOUT LITTLE
GIRLS TURNING EVIL



SOON I'LL DO SOME-
THING YOU CAN'T
FORGIVE YOU'LL
HATE ME AND I'LL
LOSE THIS THING
THAT'S PINNING
ME DOWN

I'LL
FINALLY
LOSE
HOPE









IT ISN'T.



GASP!

YEAH.
NOW
LET'S



LOOK! HHEY!
LOOK! IT'S
REALLY HER,
WOW LOOK!
LOOK!
LOOK!

EEE!
EEE!
OHMIGOD,
EEE!
THIS IS SO
COOL!!



WE-HELLO!
WE'RE
MEMBERS UM,
OF YOUR FAN
CLUB! HELLO?
HEY! HELLO?
HELLO?

OH! OH!
OHMIGOD!
EEE! I
CAN'T BELIEVE
IT'S REALLY
YOUU!

HEY, HEY,
SMILE FOR THE
CAMERA! HEY!
JUST FLAT THERE,
LIKE THAT! HEY!



WOOOSH!



THERE
SHE IS!!



GOD.
HUMANS ARE
STUPID

WAS
I THAT
STUPID WHEN
I WAS A
HUMAN?

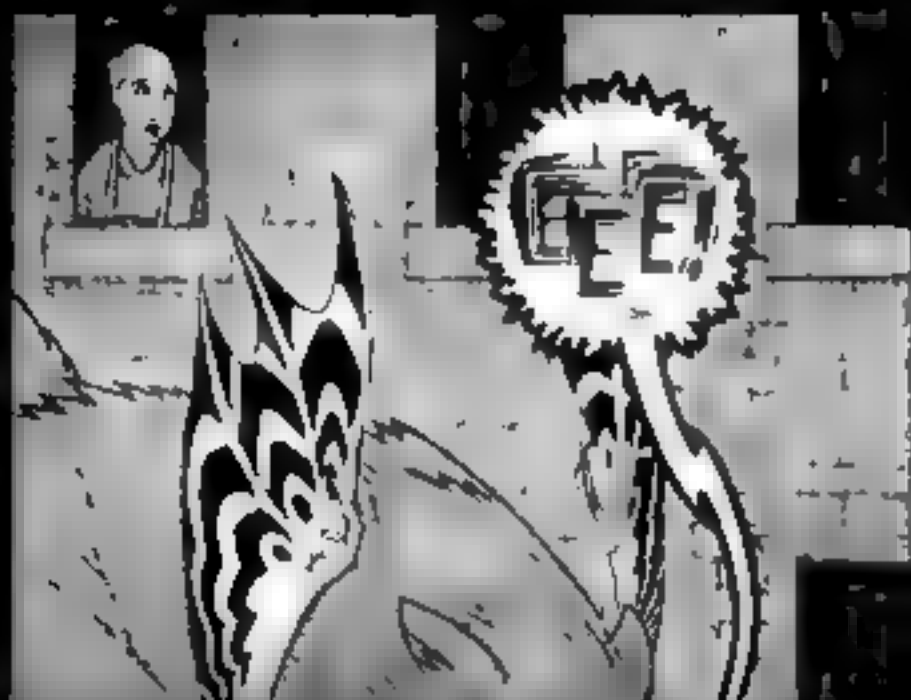
BET I
WAS



WAIT



IS
SOMEONE
SNEAKING
UP ON
M--



EEE!



WHOOHULF!



PWT!

I
I
GOT
HER!





WELL 79



SOME TIME EARLIER

THOSE FENCE POSTS WERE TEMPERED IN HELLFIRE SO EVEN SANDRA CAN'T CUT THE DAMN THINGS!

SEE, NONE OF MY SPELLS CAN HOLD HER

BUT A REGULAR CAGE, SORT OF, MIGHT WORK ON HER LIKE ANYONE ELSE!

HOW WILL WE FIND HER?

YOU'LL FIND HER

IT WOULDN'T BE HARD IF SHE'S HANGING AROUND WHERE SHE WAS LAST TIME. GIRL MAKES NOISE

WELL, HER VICTIMS DO

BUT JUST BRING HER DOWN FOR A SECOND, SEND THE SIGNAL, I'LL DO THE WORK AND COME RUNNING!

OH BOY

GAD

I'M COMING WALLY

OH

ARMS SO TIRED

SOMEONE BROUGHT CAR

HOW LONG DO WE'RE WOLVES STAY UNCONSCIOUS?? I HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE

Z

THINK THINK THINK
OKAY
... GOT IT

THERE MUST BE SOMEONE AWAKE AND OUTSIDE AND CLOSE ENOUGH

STEPHEN

17



SOME
SOMEONE
THERE?

IS THAT
A NOISE?
I CAN'T
QUITE

STEPHEN

HELP
MEE

I
NEED
YOU

I'M
HERE
STEPHEN

WHAT
IS THAT
SOUND??



SUCKER'S ON
HIS WAY ALRIGHT,
THIS SHOULD BE EASY
DEMONS DO THIS
ALL THE TIME IN
THE MOVIES

SO SANDRA,
MEET STEPHEN
SANDRA, WAAE
STEPHEN

LET'S
SAY HIS MIND
IS A NIGHT SKY
HIS
MEMORIES ARE
POINTS OF LIGHT
STARS

OH,
THAT'S
PRETTY

BUT WHICH
ONE DO I WANT?
DAMMIT, THEY ALL
LOOK ALIKE

NIGHT SKY
PSH NEXT TIME I
EMULON SOMEONE'S MIND
IT'LL BE A USER-FRIENDLY
INTERFACE



WAIT,
THERE IT
IS
A MEMORY
OF SOMEONE HE
LOVED OF SOMEONE
HE LOST I CAN
FEEL THE ACHE OF
REGRET

WHO DO
YOU WANT
TO SEE,
STEPHEN?

WOAH

SCHNAUZER!

WOOF!

HE
THINKS
I'M HIS
DOG??

THINK
YOU GOT
THE DOG
BOY?

THINK
THAT! FIND
ANOTHER
MEMORY!
CONCENTRATE!



WOOF

YEAH!

BAM!



AND WHEN MY DEAD
WHAT YOU'RE NOT
SCHEDULED



REBECCA! OH MY GOD
REBE! I THOUGHT YOU
WERE IN FLORIDA,
BABY!

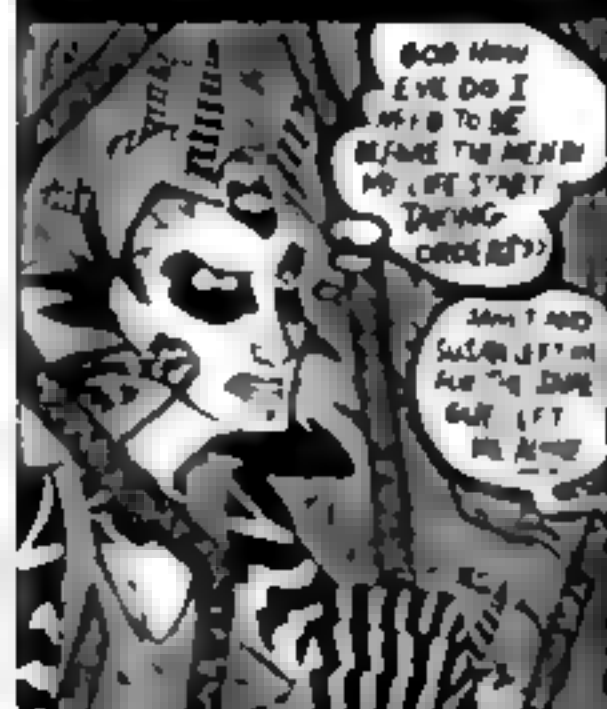
AN
I WAS BUT I'M
HERE NOW STEPHEN
AND WE CAN BE
TOGETHER AGAIN IF
YOU JUST HELP ME
FREE ME FROM
HERE??

O-OR
COULD YOU
DO I FREE
YOU?



WELL, HIGH SCHOOL I
KNOW, DUMBASS? THERE
ON THE OUTSIDE YOU
FIGURE IT OUT FOR
SOME THING!

WHAT I
HAVE TO GET
THINGS
OFF MY CHEST
I NEED TO GET
IT OUT OF MY
MIND
I NEED TO
GET IT OUT
OF MY MIND
I NEED TO
GET IT OUT
OF MY MIND



GOD HOW
EVEN DO I
NEED TO BE
BEFORE THE MEN
NO LIFE START
DURING
ORDER??

I AM NOT
SUSAN LET ME
ALIVE THE SAME
GUY LET
ME ALIVE



ALONE BABY
DID YOU KNOW
SUSAN? A OR D?
SUSAN? AND
YOU TOO

HIDDEN
FUNNY

?



OH
WHAT?

WOW CASP
ALIVE WHY THEN
HE GETS AWAY
FROM HERE?

YOU'RE
SEEING
SOMEONE
ELSE?



NO
NO I'M
SINGLE
RIGHT
NOW
HKKI



JACK I AM SO PISSED
W/ BY THIS YOU HAVE
NO KFA GET ME OUT
OF HERE OR I WILL
KILL THIS GUY

HKKI

SANDRA



COME ON YOU
Havent KILLED
ANYONE AND I
DONT KNOW YOU
ANYMORE DONT
WALK LIKE THAT
IT'S OUT OF
MY MOUTH
SANDRA

BUT
I KNOW
YOU MUST
HAVE YOUR
REASONS
FOR THAT



GOOD
POINT WHY
CALLED MY
BLUFF I'LL
MUTILATE
HIM HOW
DOES THAT
SOUND?

OH

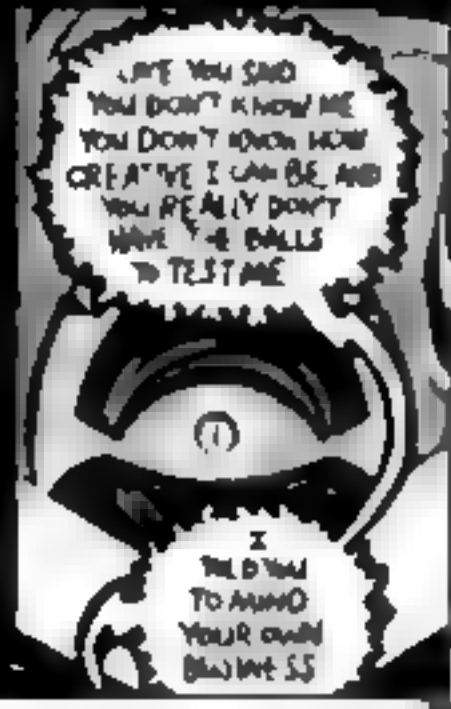


OF COURSE I
Havent PERMANENTLY
DISMEMBERED ANYONE
ETHER BUT MAYBE
THAT'S BECAUSE NO
ONE EVER PLANNED ON
BUT THIS LIKE YOU'VE
BEEN DOING
LATELY



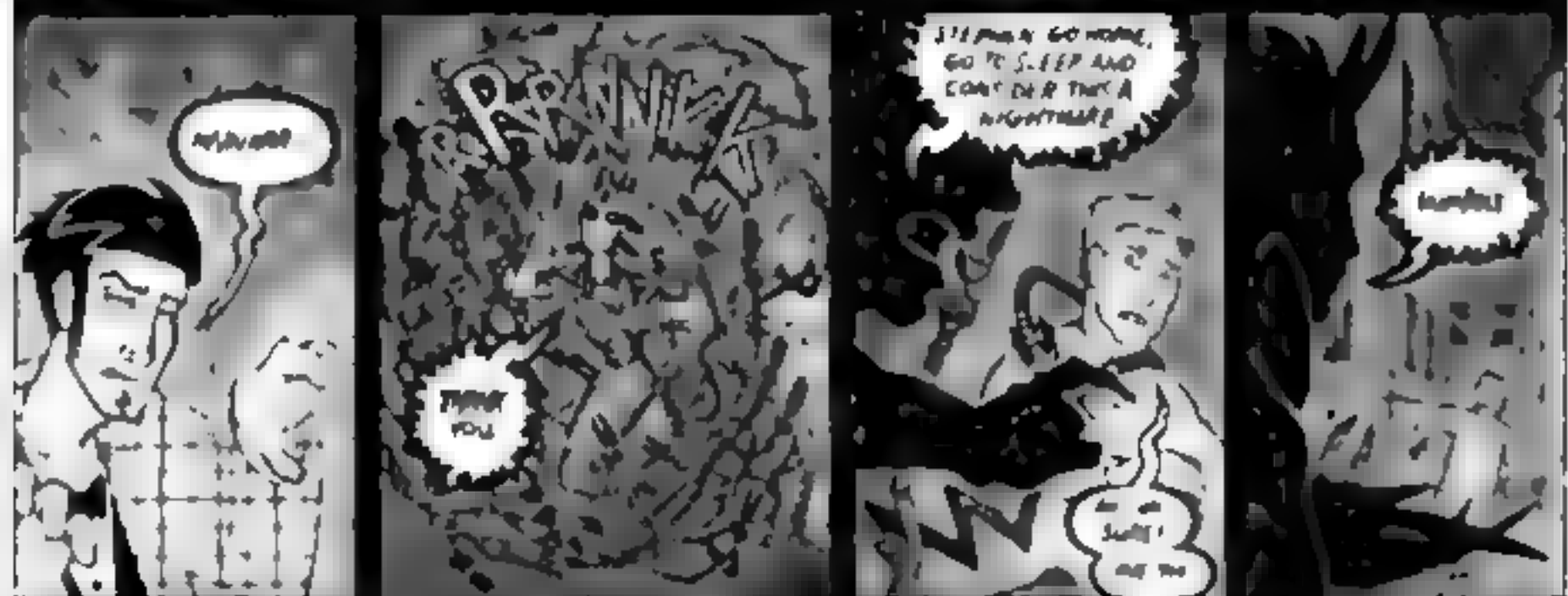
I KNOW
YOU CANT
STOP ME YOUR
MADNESS ALL
WORN
OUT

BUT YOU
CAN OPEN THE
CASE, RIGHT?
CAUSE I CAN
PERFORM AT
ANY TIME
YOU DO



LIFE YOU SAID
YOU DONT KNOW ME
YOU DONT KNOW HOW
CREATIVE I CAN BE, AND
YOU REALLY DONT
HAVE THE BALLS
TO TEST ME

I
TOLD YOU
TO ANSWER
YOUR OWN
BUT NOT SS





HOW LONG DO
DEMONS STAY
UNCONSCIOUS?

YOU
HAVEN'T SLEPT
IN WEEKS DID
YOU KNOW
THAT?

WELL,
WHAT IS
TIME TO A
DEMON?

A DEMON HAS NO GRASP
OF PAST OR FUTURE. THE HABIT
THOSE HUMANS HAVE OF SPRINGING INTO
EXISTENCE AND THEN FALLING THROUGH
THEIR REALM IS NOTHING TO THEM, NOTHING
BUT A CONSTANT PRECIPITATION. A GENTLE
SNOWFALL IN THE EAST, A TORRENTIAL
DOWNPOUR IN THE WEST, THE FORECAST
INDICATES FLOODING IN THE PLAINS OF
GORTH. THE SCREAMS OF THE DAMNED
ARE BUT THE PATTTER OF WATER
ON THE WINDOWPANE.

IN THE
HOUSE OF
ETERNITY NO
WALL BEARS
A CLOCK'S
WEIGHT.

OR
MAYBE IT'S
JUST THAT
TIME FLIES WHEN
YOU'RE HAVING
FUN.

THAT'S YOUR
COUNTRY BY THE
WAY, GORTH. THAT'S
WHERE THE THREE-
EYED ONES BAPTIZED
GREGORE.

DID YOU
KNOW WE'RE STILL
IN THE FIRST SECOND
OF YOU FALLING UN-
CONSCIOUS? I'M LUCKY
I CAUGHT YOU ON
THE WAY DOWN.

IT'S NOT
IMPORTANT REALLY,
I GUESS I JUST WANTED
ONE LAST FORAY INTO YOUR
BEAUTIFUL MIND. SEEMS
LIKE I BARELY GOT
TO KNOW THE
PLACE.

SO MUCH
FOR TIME



SANDRA?

WE'RE HAVING EGGNOG

START SOME COFFEE FOR ME, I'LL BE INSIDE IN A FEW MINUTES

OKAY

ARE YOU OKAY, SANDRA?

MOM WOULD ALWAYS TAKE ME OUT WALKING FOR DAYS LIKE THIS. SHE'D DRAG ME OUT OF BED AND I WOULD ACT ALL EXCITED BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT TO HURT HER FEELINGS.

AND WE WOULD WALK IN THE WOODS AND SHE WOULD POINT OUT THE TREES AND THEN PLAY IN THE SNOW, AND I WOULD PLAY ALONG EVEN THOUGH I WAS COLD AND UNCOMFORTABLE AND ALL I REALLY WANTED WAS TO GO BACK INSIDE AND BE WARM.

ARE YOU COLD NOW?

NO.

I CAN'T SEEM TO GET UNCOMFORTABLE ANYMORE.

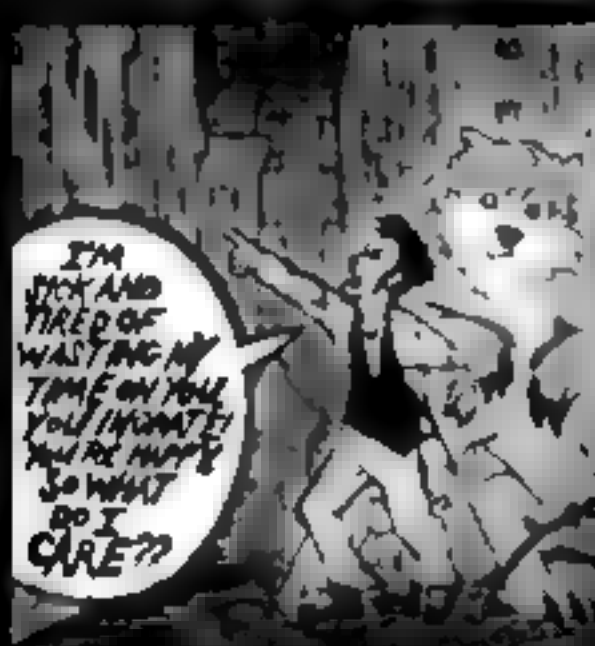
OH.

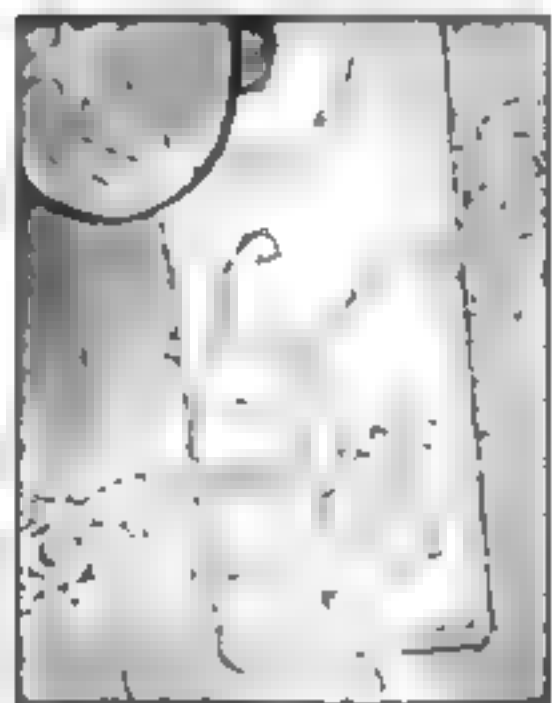
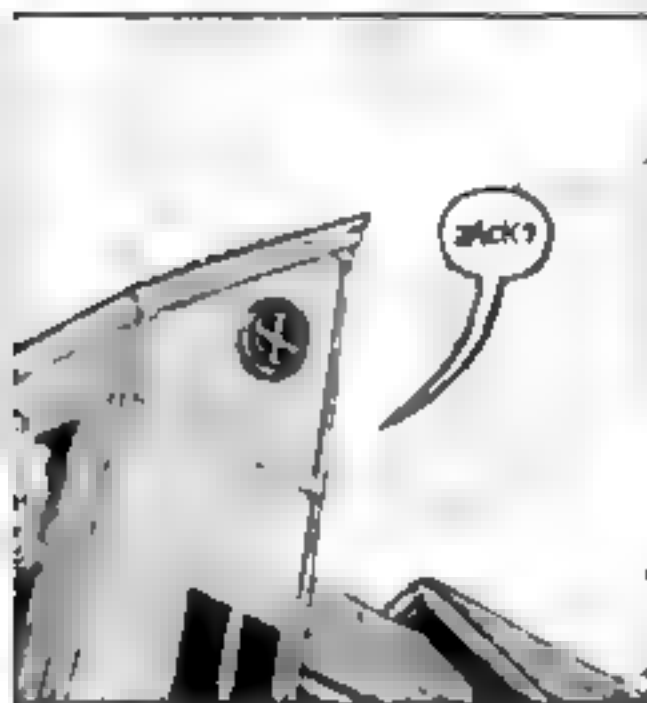
DO YOU THINK SHE'S OUT WALKING TODAY?

SURE I TOLD HER TO, OVER THE PHONE.

I SAID I'D BE WALKING TOO.











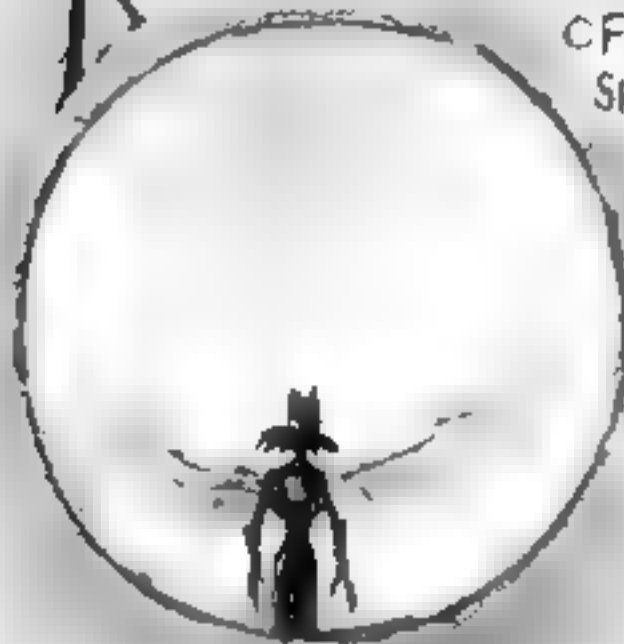
ONCE UPON A TIME, IN THE
LAND OF MISCELLANEA,
THERE STOOD A WOODEN
CASTLE.

THE VILLAGERS CALLED IT
THE POINTED HOUSE, AND
IT DOMINATED THE
LANDSCAPE



AS
THE SUN PASSED
OVERHEAD ITS POINTED
SHADOW WOULD SWING ACROSS
THE STORES AND HOUSES SURROUNDING
IT, LIKE A GREAT SCYTHE, AND AT NIGHT ITS
POINTED SILHOUETTE WOULD CUT THE MOON.

KHAZANDRA OF THE EASTERN LAKE WAS THE ELEGANT LADY
OF THE HOUSE, AND MISCELLANEA'S PATRON MONSTER.
SHE ENJOYED A POSITION OF AUTHORITY BECAUSE
SHE BROUGHT FEAR TO THE PEOPLE.



WHICH,
IT SHOULD BE
NOTED

DID NOT
NECESSARILY
MAKE HER AN
UNDESIRABLE
ELEMENT.



THEY DECIDE TO BE
 PLEASED THE
 FEAR IS A
 NECESSITY
 OF LIFE

THE HEROES WERE THROU TO
 BE BUILT IN THE FACE OF THE
 CHILDREN WHO WOULD THE
 ADULTS WHO WERE THE
 ADULTS WHO WERE THE
 ADULTS WHO WERE THE

SO, WHEN THE HEROES WERE
 BELOVED AND WERE APPRECIATED
 AND SHE WAS WELL RESPECTED
 AND ALSO WELL REVERED.

IN THE END THE HEROES WERE SO FULL
 OF FEAR AND COULD NOT NOTICE THE
 FIGHTING AND THE GRACE OF THE
 LOCAL WERE REMOVED AT THE END OF THE
 HEROES CHOSE WITH HUMILITY AND
 AID WHERE THE HEROES FELT A PAINFUL
 DOWN THE A SIDE THE HEROES WERE HUMILITY
 REMOVED AT THE END OF THE HEROES
 THE HEROES THE SHOULDERS WITH THE HEROES



NO ONE WOULD DENY SHE WAS AN EXPERT
WHEN IT CAME TO FEAR, AND THE CAUSING OF IT
BUT WHAT WAS KHAZANDRA AFRAID OF?



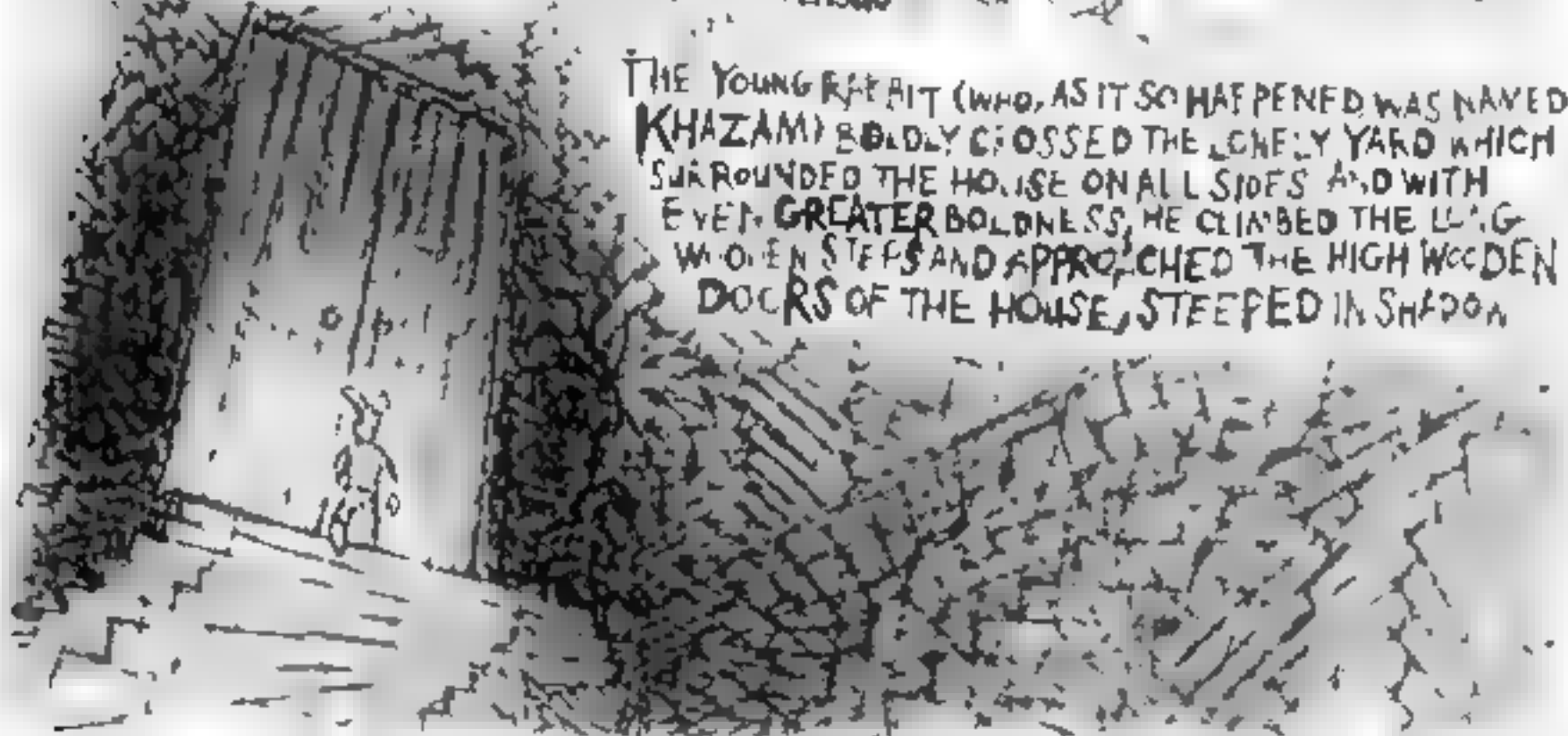
THOUGH IT CROSSED THEIR MINDS, MOST PEOPLE
ASSUMED THAT SHE WASN'T AFRAID OF ANYTHING,
AND CONSIDERED IT A SILLY QUESTION. AND THEY
CERTAINLY DIDN'T WANT TO OFFEND HER BY ASKING.

BUT ONE DAY A YOUNG RABBIT
HAPPENED TO GROW CURIOUS.

(MISCE. AREA WAS ALSO KNOWN FOR
THE ABILITY OF RABBIT)

AND, AFTER THINKING VERY
CAREFULLY, HE DECIDED THAT HE
DIDN'T CARE WHO HE OFFENDED.
SO HE WENT TO THE POINTED HOUSE
TO ASK IN SPITE OF THE GENERAL CONSENSUS

THE YOUNG RABBIT (WHO, AS IT SO HAPPENED WAS NAMED
KHAZAM) BOLDLY CROSSED THE LONE YARD WHICH
SURROUNDED THE HOUSE ON ALL SIDES AND WITH
EVEN GREATER BOLDNESS, HE CLIMBED THE LONG
WOODEN STEPS AND APPROACHED THE HIGH WOODEN
DOORS OF THE HOUSE, STEEPED IN SHADOW



HE CALLED UP TO THEM,
"LET ME IN! KHAZAM WANTS TO COME IN!"
AND, BOLDLY, HE WAITED.

OF COURSE, THE DOORS WERE MAGICAL, SO
IT WAS NOT STRANGE THAT KHAZAM WOULD
TRY SPEAKING TO THEM. BUT THEY WERE
ALSO LOYAL TO KHAZAM, DHA, AND
HAD BEEN GIVEN STRICT
INSTRUCTIONS TO OPEN
ONLY FOR HER.

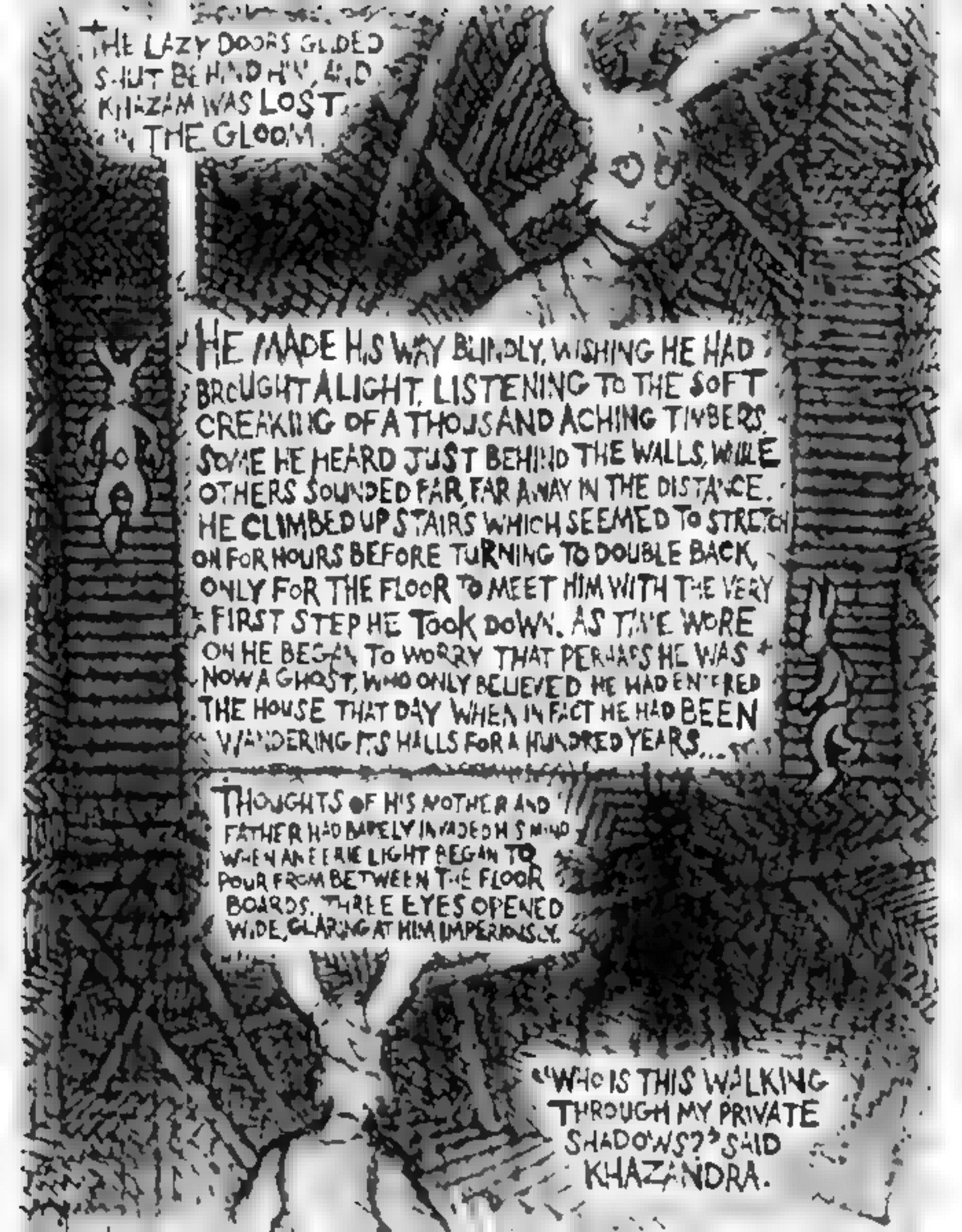
HOWEVER, SO FEW PEOPLE VISITED THE
HOUSE THAT OVER THE YEARS THEY HAD
GROWN LAZY AND INATTENTIVE AS WELL. THEY
HADN'T QUITE LISTENED TO WHAT KHAZAM HAD
SAID, THOUGH BY THEIR MAGIC THEY KNEW HE WAS
NOT LYING. AND, AFTER A MOMENT...

THEY PARTED REVERENTLY,
GROINING, GIVING WAY TO A
DEEP WOODEN DARKNESS.

KHAZAM PEERED INSIDE AND FELT
MARGINALLY LESS BOLD.
HE WAS HEARTENED BY THE
ACQUIESCENCE OF THE
DOORS, THOUGH, AND
WASILY CROSSED THE
THRESHOLD.

IT NEVER OCCURRED
TO HIM THAT THEY
MIGHT HAVE HEARD
HIS NAME WRONG.





THE LAZY DOORS GLIDED
SHUT BEHIND HIM, AND
KHAZAM WAS LOST
IN THE GLOOM.

HE MADE HIS WAY BLINDLY, WISHING HE HAD
BROUGHT A LIGHT, LISTENING TO THE SOFT
CREAKING OF A THOUSAND ACHING TIMBERS.
SOME HE HEARD JUST BEHIND THE WALLS, WHILE
OTHERS SOUNDED FAR, FAR AWAY IN THE DISTANCE.
HE CLIMBED UP STAIRS WHICH SEEMED TO STRETCH
ON FOR HOURS BEFORE TURNING TO DOUBLE BACK,
ONLY FOR THE FLOOR TO MEET HIM WITH THE VERY
FIRST STEP HE TOOK DOWN. AS TIME WORE
ON HE BEGAN TO WORRY THAT PERHAPS HE WAS
NOW A GHOST, WHO ONLY BELIEVED HE HAD ENTERED
THE HOUSE THAT DAY WHEN IN FACT HE HAD BEEN
WANDERING ITS HALLS FOR A HUNDRED YEARS...

THOUGHTS OF HIS MOTHER AND
FATHER HAD BARELY INVADED HIS MIND
WHEN AN EERIE LIGHT BEGAN TO
POUR FROM BETWEEN THE FLOOR
BOARDS. THREE EYES OPENED
WIDE, GLARING AT HIM IMPERIOUSLY.

"WHO IS THIS WALKING
THROUGH MY PRIVATE
SHADOWS?" SAID
KHAZANDRA.

THE LIGHT GRAY
HE WAS REVEALED
EVEN MORE
SEVERAL HOURS
COURT OF
A COURT OF
TENTED.
HE WAS AFTER
ALL A JAMSTER

STEELING
HE DECLINED AS
INTENDING "I AM
HAPPY HE SUD
AND THE COURT
AND A QUESTION
AND THE THE
LATTER LINE"

ON THE SEPARATE
HE WAS LINE A
THAT THE
IT MUST BE A
VEING
THE WARE
HERE UNWATED
IN THE
DISTIN MY
HOUSE FOR
HE ANSWERED

WHAT ARE YOU
AFRAID OF?

HE WAS
HE CROSSED
HORNMAN BEG
DO THE WHOLE
INTERNAL
SOLID AND TO
WITH ME. AN
PERHAPS I
TELL YOU!

HE DID NOT OBJECT THOUGH HE HAD BEEN NATURALLY IN THE DISCOVERED
SHE UNFOLDED HER ARMS AND THE SHADOWS

THEY WERE IN AN ORNATE DINING ROOM, AND TO KHAZAN'S SURPRISE, HE SAW A LONG TABLE LAD-
OUT WITH ALL THE SORT OF THINGS A KING
WOULD WANT LIKE TREATS

AS HE HANGERS LY DE JOINED HIS GRIENS HE CONFESSED TO
KHAZANDRA (WHO SIMPLY SIPPED A DARK, STEAMING BREW, THAT
HE HAD NOT THOUGHT HIS PLAN QUITE THROUGH SHE LISTENED
PATIENTLY AND ASSURED HIM THAT HE WOULD BE ALLOWED TO
LEAVE THE HOUSE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

AFTER THEY HAD EATEN SHE TOOK HIM DOWN FRESHLY
LIT HALLS DECORATED WITH STRANGE WORKS OF ART
KHAZAN WOULD HAVE ASKED WHERE IT HAD ALL COME
FROM, ONCE EARLIER THE WALLS HAD SEEMED BARE
BUT HE DECIDED TO LIMIT HIS QUESTIONS TO JUST ONE
AND HE WAS ABOUT TO ASK IT AGAIN WHEN KHAZANDRA
BROUGHT HIM TO A WOODEN DOOR.

SHE LEANED CLOSE AND SAID,
"THIS DOOR WILL TAKE YOU
TO ANY ROOM IN THE WORLD
SO LONG AS IT IS DARK AND
I KNOW YOU DON'T HAVE A
BRIGHT LIGHT NEAR
YOUR BED, SO YOU CAN
GO HOME AFTER SUNSET"

IT OCCURRED TO KHAZAN THAT
SHE MUST HAVE BEEN IN
HIS ROOM BEFORE.

IN THE MENTAT "AND KNOW MORE
PERHAPS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE
MORE OF MY HOME."

KHIZAN FOUND HER HOSPITALITY SLIGHTLY
STRANGE, BUT HE WAS AFTER ALL, VERY
COURT. SO HE LET HER FURTHER INTO THE
HOUSE, UP STAIRS, DOWN PASSAGES, AND
AND SO MANY RIGHT CORNERS THAT
HE WAS CERTAIN THAT THERE WOULD BE
SOME NICHES PICTURES OF
HOMESCRIPT FILES
SARRANED THEM, STANDING
AT NOSE, WITH PAINED,
POINTLESS EYES.

THE LITTLE RABBIT TRIED TO
STAY THE HORSE IN PASSING ONLY
FOR THE RABBIT THIS WAS HIM WITH
AN ALMOST AGONY OF THE FACILITY.
CHILLING WOODEN PAINS PERVADED
THE DITCH WORK NIASMA, LEAVING HIS
EYES TO DARK CORNERS, BE TRAYING A
FIGURE FACADE. ENRAGED HE FAILED
TO THINK THAT HE WAS NO JEWELER, A LIVING
KHIZAN'S FACE, AND THE LIGHT CAME
DOWN AS SHE LEFT HIM BEHIND.


KHIZAN BEGAN TO REMEMBER THAT HE
WAS WALKING HIS WAY TO THE DOORS
OF A CHAOTIC WOODEN STRUCTURE, THAT
HE WOULD BE DISCOVERED, DRIVING IN
THE DEEP TALKING CORRIDORS.

IF THE HOUSE WAS ALIVE, HE WONDERED, THEN
WHAT WAS KHAZANDRA? WAS SHE OR WAS NOT?
ITS ACCIDENTAL WOUNDS LIKE A TUMOR? HAD THE HOUSE
GROWN AROUND HER, LIKE A SCAR COVERING A WOUND?
WAS SHE ITS HEART? OR WAS SHE ITS BRAIN, RATIONAL
AND DIFFERENT, GUIDING ANOTHER SOMEONE CONTAMINATED
TOWHERE IT MIGHT MOST EASILY BE ERASED?

HIS INFATIGABLES HAD ALMOST
MUTATED INTO FANCY WHEN A
REFRESHING SHIVER MOVED HIM
FROM HIS REMORSE. THE LIGHT
RETURNED AS KHAZANDRA LIFTED
HER FINGER FROM HIS SHOULDER.

KHAZANDRA WAS HUMBLED BY THE
RELIEF HE FELT AND PRESENTLY HE
REMEMBERED THAT SHE HADN'T
GIVEN HIM ANY REASON TO IN A
HARDY OF HER IN FACT SHE HAD
BEEN QUIETER AND THOUGHT
HE THOUGHT SHE MUST
HAST TAKEN A DIRECT
PLAYING A FEARING Y
JUST ASHES WAS ON THE
VERGE OF TEARS AND
TOLD HER SO SHE
SMILED INDULGENTLY
AND GESTURED
TOWARD A DEAD OR
MAKE OUT OF CLIMB.

THE WALLS OF THE ROOM WERE
COVERED WITH PICTURES
SOME WERE TALL, OTHERS WERE
SMALL AND SOME WERE
STAINED GLASS PICTURES.



THROUGH EACH OF THE WINDOWS WAS AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT ROOM." THESE LOOK INTO ALL THE HOUSES IN MISCELLANE, EXPLAINED KHAZANDRA. "WHENEVER I PEEK THROUGH THEM A SHADOW OF MY REFLECTION APPEARS IN THE GLASS ON THE OTHER SIDE, FRIGHTENING WHOEVER GLIMPSES IT."

AFTER FINDING THE WINDOW TO HIS OWN ROOM, KHAZAM THOUGHT OF ANOTHER GOOD QUESTION THAT HE KEPT HIMSELF FROM ASKING. BUT TO HIS SURPRISE, KHAZANDRA ANSWERED IT ANYWAY.

"YOU WANT TO KNOW WHY I FRIGHTEN PEOPLE," SHE SAID. "I DO IT BECAUSE, WITHOUT MONSTERS, PEOPLE WOULD FEAR THE VAGUE COMPLEXITY OF LIFE ITSELF. OR, WORSE, THEY WOULD FEAR EACH OTHER. AND I DON'T WANT TO ALLOW SUCH DEPRESSION, ESPECIALLY SINCE MY POWER ISN'T GOOD FOR MUCH ELSE BUT CAUSING FEAR."

"IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE AFRAID OF?" SAID KHAZAM.

"No," SAID KHAZANDRA. "IT'S WHAT I TELL MYSELF."

BEFORE HE COULD PRESS THE ISSUE FURTHER SHE USHERED HIM AWAY TO CONTINUE HER TOUR.

THE DAY WIRE ON, AND THEY VISITED THE PORTRAGE
 ROOM. THROUGH OTHER STRANGE DOORS, IN ONE OF
 THEM THE YOUNG MAN WAS LEADING, FLUENTLY GROWING
 WAS GROWING A PINE TREE WHICH HAD GROWN OUT
 OF THE FLOOR, NURTURED BY THE SUN THROUGH A SMALL
 ENLIGHTENMENT. ANOTHER DOOR WAS A
 LIBRARY, FILLED WITH BOOKS WHICH
 HAD BEEN ON THEIR COVERS IN TENS OF
 THOUSANDS.

THROUGH TAL KHAZINDRA
 SPOKE. SHE TOLD KHAZINDRA ABOUT
 THE TASTY FOOD WHO BUILT
 THE HOUSE ABOUT THE GIRL WHO
 PLANTED THE TREE, ABOUT
 THE ROOMS AND THE WOODS AND
 THE DOORS. BY THE TIME EVENING
 CAME THE YOUNG MAN FELT HE
 HAD BEEN GRANTED AN AUTHORITY ON
 THE WOODEN CASTLE AND ITS
 MISTRESS, THE TOWER OF WHICH HE
 WAS OVERLY FRIGHTENED STAYING.

THEY HAD JUST LEFT
 THE SILENT MACHAL
 WHEN KHAZINDRA REVEALED
 THAT HE STILL HADN'T
 ANSWERED HIS BIG
 QUESTIONS. WITH AN
 UNEXPLAINED SENSE OF
 URGENCY HE SPOKE
 MORE KHAZINDRA
 WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

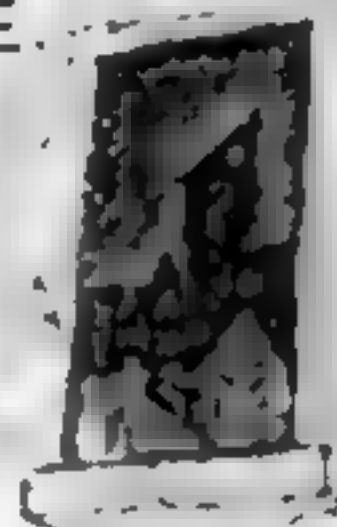
SHE TURNED TO
 FACE HIM AND
 HER EYES BEGAN
 TO CRY.
 "I MIGHT
 TELL YOU,"
 SHE SAID,
 "BUT I THINK
 YOU SHOULD KNOW.
 THE KING IS
 ALREADY SICK
 AND HE MUST
 MUST FLY AWAY
 TO ATTEND TO
 BUSINESS
 AND HE WOULD
 LET ME
 ALONE HERE
 A LITTLE
 DEVOTION
 THE HOUSE."





OF COURSE THAT'S JUST WHAT IT WAS, AND IN THE NEXT MOMENT
KHATAM TUMPLED HARMLESSLY OUT OF HIS CLOSET AND INTO HIS
ROOM, FAN FROM THE WOODEN CASTLE.

AFTER GIVING HIS BEARINGS HE TURNED OFF HIS
LIGHTS, SHUT THE CLOSET DOOR, CLOSED HIS
CURTAINS AND CALLED TO HIS
PARENTS: I AM SAFE IN MY ROOM.
BECAUSE THEY MUST HAVE BEEN ASKED
WHY HE WANTED TO
BE ALONE HIMSELF. THEN
HE WENT TO BED, FORGOTTEN
ALL ABOUT HIS DAY.



HE HAD NO AFRID VENTURE, BUT ULTIMATELY AN
UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT TO FIND A WAY TO
BE ALONE. THE NEXT DAY HE WAS DISTRACTED
BY THE FEELING OF A STRANGE
RATHER THAN A CONFIDENCE IN TRUTH.
HE PONDERED.

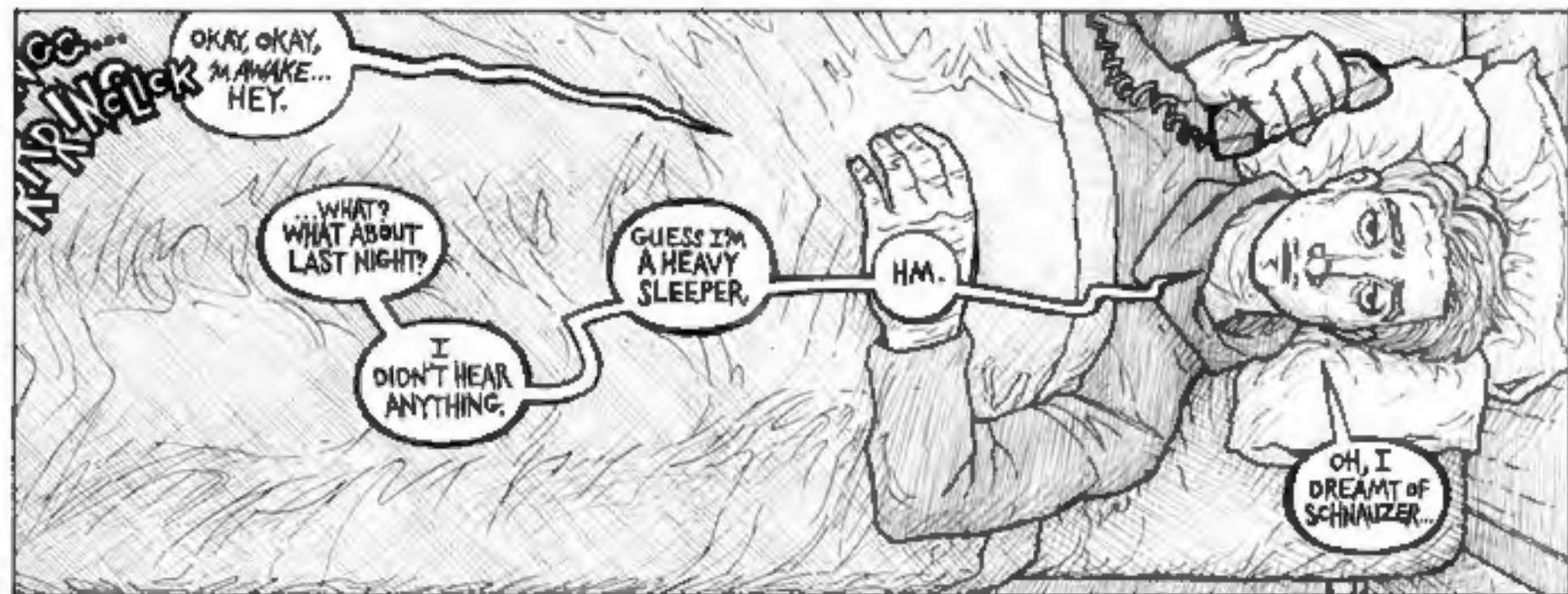
HE THEN HE REALIZED

HE HAD NEVER
BEEN AFRAID.

DAYLIGHT SPREADS LIKE A STAIN ON THE TOWN OF MISCELLANEOUS, EATING AWAY AT ITS SHADOWS. MEANWHILE ITS DEVIL DREAMS AND ITS PEOPLE FIND COMFORT IN THE FAMILIAR ILLUSIONS OF UNDERSTANDING AND CONTROL....

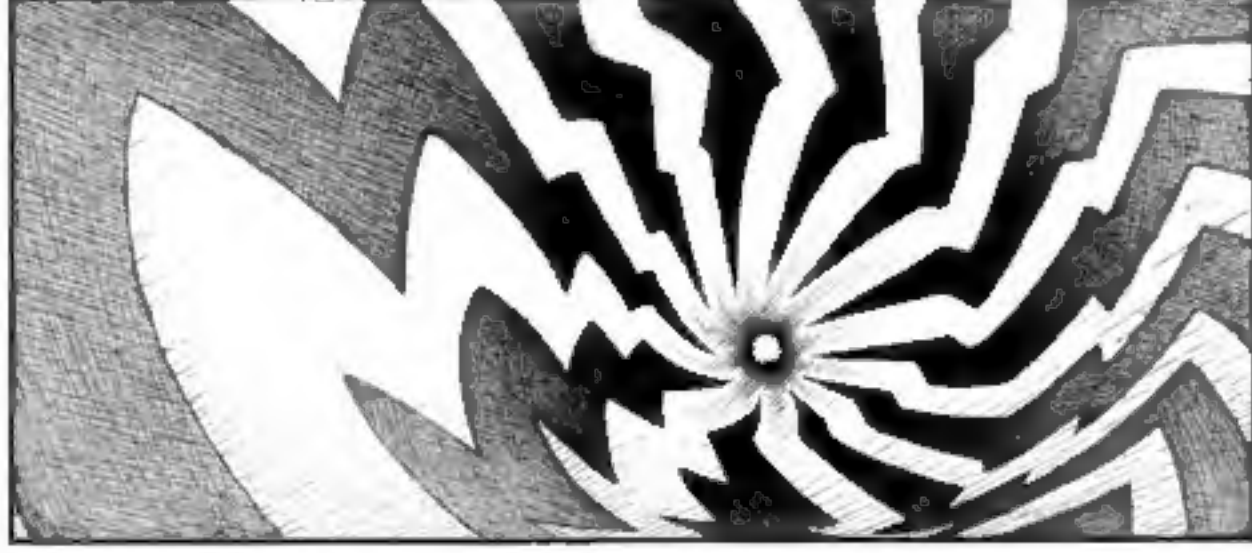
AND IN COFFEE, SINCE MANY OF THEM MUST STAVE OFF FATIGUE ACCRUED FROM ANOTHER NIGHT SPENT IN FRONT OF A SCREEN OR WITH THE LIGHTS KEPT ON.

ELECTRIC BILLS HAVE BEEN GETTING PRETTY HIGH.



NOW, YOU MIGHT HAVE LOST THE PLOT, SO LET'S TAKE A MINUTE TO REVIEW. WHAT HAPPENED A FEW MONTHS AGO WAS, PROFESSOR BROADSHOULDERS... THE MONSTER HUNTER, HE CAUGHT SANDRA IN A HUGE, DEMONIC CONFLAGRATION. HIS PLAN WAS TO DRAG HER TO HELL, BUT SHE EMBRACED HER EVIL POWER AND ESCAPED. BROADSHOULDERS DID GO TO HELL, AND ASIDE FROM BEING SANDRA'S SLAVE I THINK HE'S DOING ALRIGHT, BUT SANDRA WENT ON TO TERRORIZE THE TOWN BY USING HER NEWFOUND AWARENESS TO DOMINATE THE CITIZENRY. SHE MUST HAVE PICKED THE PROFESSOR'S BRAINS TO FIND HIS CABIN IN THE WOODS, HIDDEN FROM MYSTIC DETECTION, THE PERFECT HIDEOUT FROM WHICH TO SPREAD HER DARK INFLUENCE OVER MISCELLANEOUS. SEE, UNLIKE HUMANS, DEMONS HAVE THE ABILITY TO MULTIPLY THEIR PRESENCE, TO CONCENTRATE ON MORE THAN ONE THING AND BE IN MORE THAN ONE PLACE AT A TIME. THEY'RE EXCELLENT MULTI-TASKERS. I THINK IT'S BECAUSE THE RECESSES OF SUB-REALITY BETWEEN EARTH AND HELL REQUIRE A CERTAIN COMPLEXITY OF THOUGHT WHICH ELUDES REGULAR MORTALS... MOST PEOPLE JUST GLIMPSE BASEMENT REALMS THROUGH DREAMY VISION QUESTS AND THE ODD DRUG TRIP, BUT A DEMON CAN TOUR THEM WITH PERFECT CLARITY. COMPARED TO THOSE INTRICATE FATHOMS, OUR NARROW WAKING WORLD IS STUPIDLY SIMPLE TO INVADE. AN EXPERIENCED DEMON CAN FILL A BUILDING, A TOWN... ALL THEY HAVE TO MANAGE IS THE SIMPLE ACT OF STILL BEING IN A ROOM THAT THEY NO LONGER OCCUPY. AND THAT'S WHAT SANDRA LEARNED TO DO WHEN SHE STARTED THINKING WITH HER DEMON'S MIND. BUT SHE'S STILL AN AMATEUR DEMON, RIGHT? SHE STILL MAKES MISTAKES. WE TRIED TO CATCH HER LAST NIGHT, AND AT SOME POINT SHE MUST HAVE GOTTEN DISTRACTED ENOUGH TO SHIFT HER FOCUS TOWARDS A SINGLE THING AND... I GUESS SHE FORGOT TO STILL BE IN THE CABIN, WHERE AS I UNDERSTAND IT YOU'VE BEEN HELD CAPTIVE SINCE THE PROFESSOR CAPTURED YOU JUST BEFORE HE TRIED TO CAPTURE SANDRA.

WE ALL CAUGHT UP?



YEAH, AND WHEN SHE FINDS OUT I'M GONE SHE'S GOING TO FLIP OUT AND FLY OVER HERE AND PROBABLY BURN THE HOUSE DOWN. FOR GOD'S SAKE JACK, CAN WE GET A MOVE ON?

HEY, EXCUSE ME FOR TAKING THE TIME TO ENJOY BEING AN AUTHORITY ON SOME THING FOR ONCE IN MY LIFE.





